

# THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

Vol. 135

AUGUST, 1950

No. 810

EPISODES OF THE MONTH

THE EDITOR

A FORTNIGHT THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

DENYS SMITH

FAMILY PARTY IN CANADA

THE HON. JOHN GRIGG

GENERAL SMUTS AT HOME

VISCOUNTESS MILNER

WIMBLEDON TO-DAY AND YESTERDAY

NEVILLE DEED

GABRIELE D'ANNUNZIO

SIR OSBERT SITWELL

CHURCHILL ON THE GRAND ALLIANCE

A. L. ROWSE

TWO LADIES ON THE BENCH

ERIC GILLET

WITH OTHER ARTICLES AND BOOK REVIEWS BY D. R. JARDINE,  
J. R. APPLEBEY, LADY EVE BALFOUR, DENIS CANNAN, CHARLES  
RICHARD CAMMELL AND OTHERS

*PUBLISHED MONTHLY*

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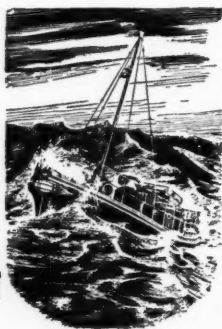
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CONTENTS

AUGUST 1950

Episodes of the Month. <i>The Editor</i> .. .. .	165
A Fortnight that Changed the World. <i>Denys Smith</i> .. .. .	185
Family Party in Canada. <i>The Hon. John Grigg</i> .. .. .	192
Is Communism Spreading in France? <i>André Stibio</i> .. .. .	194
General Smuts at Home. <i>The Viscountess Milner</i> .. .. .	197
Wicketana. <i>D. R. Jardine</i> .. .. .	199
Wimbledon To-day and Yesterday. <i>Neville Deed</i> .. .. .	202
Gabriele D'Annunzio. <i>Sir Osbert Sitwell, Bt.</i> .. .. .	205
How to Grow Groundnuts. <i>Dr. H. Martin-Leake</i> .. .. .	210
Farm and Garden: Starvation in the Midst of Plenty. <i>Lady Eve Balfour</i> .. .. .	212
After Korea. <i>J. R. Applebey</i> .. .. .	214
The Disadvantages of Drama. <i>Denis Cannan</i> .. .. .	217
Churchill on the Grand Alliance. <i>A. L. Rowse</i> .. .. .	220
Two Ladies on the Bench. <i>Eric Gillett</i> .. .. .	223
Books New and Old:	
The Divine Poet: Richard Crashaw. <i>Charles Richard Cammell</i> .. .. .	230
Things That Really Matter. <i>Lord Dunsany</i> .. .. .	235
Novels. <i>Ruby Millar</i> .. .. .	236
Buried Treasure. <i>Alec Robertson</i> .. .. .	238

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## EPISODES OF THE MONTH

**J**ULY, 1950, will be memorable in the history of the world, since events in it have completely changed the face of national and international affairs. One question is on every lip—"For better or for worse?" We answer unhesitatingly "For better." Whatever new strains and dangers may lie ahead, the free world will be better prepared to meet and overcome them for having condemned and resisted armed aggression in Korea. For that, all honour where it is unquestionably due, to the President and people of the United States. Leadership in the sudden crisis depended on them, and splendidly have they risen to it.

On the military front, aggression is, as usual, scoring some rapid and spectacular success. In the circumstances that was inevitable. But in the diplomatic sphere its Russian sponsors have little to congratulate themselves upon. Under American leadership a vast majority in the United Nations has declared itself determined to uphold the rule of law. Much more will be necessary; but peace would have been past hoping for if that moral unity had not been instantaneously displayed.

### The Challenge—

**T**HE challenge was a twofold one. It was a challenge to the United States and Great Britain who had promised independence to a united Korea in Cairo in 1943 and reaffirmed it (on both occasions with Russian agreement) two years later at Potsdam; and it was also a challenge to the United Nations, which had declared the Government at Seoul, established after free elections, to be the only lawful Government in Korea, the "Democratic People's Republic" in the north having been created in direct defiance of the United Nations as a puppet of the Soviet régime.

And the Response

**M**R. DENYS SMITH describes the American response to this double challenge in a graphic article which our readers will find upon a later page. Up to the moment when Mr. Truman announced his decision to intervene doubt and despondency had spread all over the land, and the two great Parties were bitterly divided on the conduct of the State Department, particularly in the Far East. The President's declaration of armed support to the United Nations transfigured this unhappy situation in a matter of hours. Mr. Denys Smith, an observer of long experience in America, records that "the change in the mental and moral climate was the most dramatic in the country's experience."

In this country and the Commonwealth the first reaction was equally prompt. Immediate statements in both Houses showed the Parties, on this issue, absolutely at one. The British Pacific Fleet and a valuable Australian air contingent were forthwith put under American command; and all the other Governments of the Commonwealth, including the Asiatic ones, pledged themselves to give all support within their power—Canadian and New Zealand forces have now been dispatched. Within a very short time, moreover, the action taken under the Security Council's appeal had been approved by fifty-two members of the United Nations out of a total of fifty-nine.

The Will Undoubted—What of the Power?

**I**F, then, declarations of solidarity combined with a concentration on Korea of such forces as may be immediately available were sufficient to guarantee the authority of the United Nations in the Far East and the maintenance of peace elsewhere, all would be well. One man's guess is as good as another's on what the Kremlin may decide to do; but there is no reason to assume that Premier Stalin, like Hitler, is prepared as yet to risk a major war. He undoubtedly engineered the aggression in Korea after long and careful preparation in order to test the spirit, unity and military preparedness of the Western Powers. Under inspiring leadership from Washington they have demonstrated the will to resist. That is the first and essential thing; the lesson of Munich has not been lost. But the will to resist will not by itself stop further aggression; the will is useless without the power.

## EPISODES OF THE MONTH

### Mr. Gromyko and Civil War

**R**USSIA can, if she chooses, engineer a series of further challenges without committing her own forces to war. Formosa, Indo-China, Persia, Yugoslavia, Macedonia and Germany—these are all points of danger where local non-Russian forces may be launched against independent countries, and Mr. Gromyko has enunciated the doctrine that in such areas armed action to enforce unity is justified on the same grounds as the American Civil War.

To make this parallel fit the story of Korea it would be necessary to assume that Abraham Lincoln was the puppet of some great foreign State determined to bring the whole American continent within the orbit of its own enslaving power. But its absurdity as history will not debar the Kremlin from applying it elsewhere, if the Korean experiment turns out profitable to the Communist cause.

### Where Does Stalin Stand?

**I**N the article to which we have already referred, Mr. Denys Smith gives reasons for the view that the Kremlin is experimenting in Korea on lines which will permit it to act with complete detachment if greater resistance has been aroused than it anticipated at the start. There is significance in the fact that Russia deliberately absented herself when the Security Council passed its resolutions on Korea; for she could have vetoed them and broken the United Nations by doing so, had she meditated any really open breach with Western Powers. Significant also is the fact that she has not so far overtly identified herself with the North Korean aggression. She is free to move as she chooses without loss of face—towards conciliation or towards war.

### Mr. Menzies's Lead

**O**NLY two of the fifty-two United Nations who have denounced the Korean aggression have so far shown that they appreciate the need of action on a scale befitting this emergency. They are the United States, which has already launched upon the mobilisation of its military power, and Australia, which has introduced compulsory military service in addition to placing an air contingent under American command. In this matter, Mr. Menzies heads the Commonwealth, and Australians have reason to be proud of his vigour and breadth

## THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

of view. His immediate decision to visit London, Washington and Ottawa in order to discuss the combined measures which are imperatively required is in the great tradition of leadership. Mr. Churchill would have been in Washington for the same purpose long ago, had he been in power.

### Solidarity with America

**T**WO measures are, in truth, vital. First, the closest possible contact with Washington. It is not enough to say, as Mr. Attlee did, that Marshal of the Royal Air Force Lord Tedder is there. Service chiefs depend upon political leadership to create the climate for vigorous action and to establish the organisation which action requires. Mr. Attlee should have flown to Washington within a week to show that the two Governments were prepared to act in absolute concert and to agree upon the best means of making joint plans. The gesture alone would have shown our American allies that this country was determined to support American action with every resource it could mobilise; and it would assuredly not have been lost upon Russia or the rest of the world.

It is also imperative that some joint military organisation, such as the war-time Chiefs of Staff Committee, should be brought into being at once with combined political authority behind it to ensure speed and power. Only thus can we be advised how best to expand and allocate our joint resources; only thus can world peace be preserved. At the time these words are written, the country is drifting without leadership, and our people have not been told how hard is the effort required. Nor has Britain given the great American public any unmistakable sign that the British people are with them to the limit in this business, whatever the future may hold.

### Britain's Task

**O**N Britain the emergency lays another categorical imperative. She must increase the strength of her effectives as rapidly as possible, in the Army, in the Royal Air Force, and in the naval and air forces necessary to keep the sea routes open for transport and supply. Parliament has so far been given no information enabling it to judge where we stand in these vital affairs; but about three of the most essential there is little room for doubt.

In the first place, neither the Air Arm of the Navy nor Coastal



## EPISODES OF THE MONTH

Command is adequately equipped. In the second, the Army is in no position to play the part incumbent on it in a European war. In the third, the Royal Air Force lacks the continental air-fields, especially in Germany, which are necessary for the air offensive and for air command.

### The North Korean Advance

AS we write, the North Korean army is sweeping south so rapidly that there can be no question of defeating it without a concentration of forces, not only on the sea and in the air, but on the ground. From the outset the Communist aggression in Korea has displayed the hallmarks of military ability and experience. The North Koreans opened hostilities with much superior forces, and after three weeks of fighting had increased their strength in the field to about fifteen divisions totalling some 100,000 men. These forces are obviously well trained, have been handled with professional skill, and include a hard core of veteran troops. North Korean Communist arms are more than adequate in quality and quantity for the opposition thus far encountered. Their principal constituents include Russian field-artillery and tanks, Russian-made Yak aircraft, and light naval craft.

Communist strategy has been admirable. The main initial thrust was in the west of the peninsula, in relatively low-lying or rolling country, where a comparatively ample road network facilitated turning movements around the defenders' flank. Strong Northern forces have also moved south in the centre. On the east coast a heavy initial blow disintegrated a South Korean division, while a series of landings to the south further increased the Communist threat to Taegu, the key communications centre of south-east Korea, to Pusan, the southern port and vital American base, and to the railways and roads from Pusan northwards. Besides the excellence of this strategy in scope and general competence, its timing has been masterly.

### Brave But Inadequate Defence

THE defenders' weakness has been one main key to initial Communist success. At the outset the South Koreans had about eight divisions; but these were lightly armed, lacked tanks and anti-tank weapons, and were wholly without combat experience. The extent to which these troops, after heavy early punishment, rallied, regrouped, and conducted a fighting withdrawal reflects credit on their training and on the military

## THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

qualities which Koreans have displayed in the field down the centuries. Initial American weakness on the ground in Korea has been almost as marked. The early fighting was done only by battalion combat teams numbering between 500 and 900, supported by a battery of field artillery and perhaps a few tanks. In mid-July the American front-line troops along the whole Kum River position amounted to the strength of little more than a normal brigade along a twenty-five-mile front.

### Inferior Material

NOR have American ground weapons in Korea equalled the Russian-built tanks either in quality or quantity. The United States Army has no operational heavy tanks to-day. American medium tanks date back to the Second World War and are inferior to the Russian tanks. American 105-mm. and 155-mm. field-guns and medium bazookas (2·86-inch anti-tank rockets) have proved inadequate against the heavier Russian armour. The Americans badly need a powerful, self-propelled, high-velocity anti-tank gun such as the British 17-pounder or 20-pounder. The Americans (and supporting Australians) dominate the Korean air and have mauled Communist transport and tanks a good deal; but American air strength is not sufficient, nor are local conditions suitable, for air power to play a role comparable to that played against the Germans in Normandy. American and British forces also command the sea; but monsoon conditions have helped North Korean small craft to evade Allied naval forces far too small for the extensive waters requiring watch and control. All in all, the early South Korean and American unsuccess is as little surprising as the vigour and doggedness of the defenders' delaying action have been creditable.

Our American allies have in fact begun as we ourselves have always begun—with the retreat and sacrifice which unpreparedness exacts. That is in character, and we should be the last to criticise. With them, however, as with us, the beginning is no guide to the end.

### Korea Will Be Held Or Redeemed

IF Korea is lost to them, it will be won; of that no man can doubt who knows the race. However arduous the process of reconquest, it will be carried through; and it is not possible at present to say how arduous it will be. General MacArthur has good shots in his locker which have not yet been fired, and

## EPISODES OF THE MONTH

much will depend upon the course of the campaign in the next two or three weeks.

What is certain is that Great Britain should reinforce him, not only on the sea and in the air, but on the ground, since that is his chief need and it is always between armies that the final decision lies. In the task of holding or reoccupying Korea the Commonwealth and the United States are equally concerned. Korea is not a purely American interest—nor indeed, in the narrow sense, an American interest at all. It is a testing place for the whole free world, and that world will be dishonoured if Korea is not saved from its present danger, enforced and ruthless subjection to Communist rule.

### Formosa

THE next problem is Formosa—an important one because it raises the whole Chinese question. Both the Asiatic and the Pacific members of the Commonwealth are profoundly concerned about security in South-East Asia, which is indeed a vital interest for all of them. Australia wants a Pacific treaty on lines similarly to the North Atlantic one. Such an agreement is certainly desirable ; but it is difficult to see how it can be reached until some formidable stumbling-blocks are cleared out of the way. Mr. Menzies is, we doubt not, most anxious to help in removing them ; and since Mr. Attlee sees no point in going himself to Washington, we hope that Mr. Menzies may serve that purpose, as well as others which he has in mind, in both the United States and Canada.

### The Chinese Enigma

THE worst of the stumbling-blocks is the division upon China amongst Powers who are otherwise completely united. The United States still regards the Nationalist remnant in Formosa as the legitimate Government of China ; but she has refused the offers of Chinese Nationalist troops for Korea and has ordered the Formosa Government to stop its mosquito war upon the Chinese coasts, while guaranteeing the security of the island with her own 7th Fleet. This seems to put both Chinese Governments outside the United Nations' pale, and it is perplexing for other members of that body who have written off Nationalist China and would like to reach some composition with Mao-Tsetung.

The latter remains an enigma ; he has certainly not responded to the advances of the United Kingdom Government. But he occupies a key position, and there is no reason to suppose that

## THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

his view of Chinese interests precludes all prospect of a peaceful understanding with his neighbours. France is naturally interested in such an understanding, since far too large a proportion of her military strength is at present tied to Indo-China ; and India has her own preoccupations.

### The Indian View

INDIA stands for nationalism in the East, and is rightly concerned to prevent an alliance between nationalism and Communism in which the weaker Asiatic nations would infallibly incur the painful fate of the young lady of Riga. Mr. Nehru regards the Bao-Dai régime with disfavour from that angle, though it has been guaranteed against Chinese aggression by the United States, and he desires an understanding with the Mao-Tsetung Government in China, which the United States does not recognise. Despite this difficulty, his approach to the Kremlin for a settlement in Korea seems to have been based on the suggestion that the Chinese Communist Government should be invited to the Security Council in return for the withdrawal of North Korean forces to the 38th Parallel, and that the future of Korea should then be discussed by the United Nations with Russia and Communist China at the table. (It must be assumed that the future of Formosa would be raised at the same table.) As Britain has recognised Communist China, she presumably approved that idea ; Sir David Kelly's much publicised activities in Moscow can hardly be otherwise interpreted, though the Government has so far refused to give Parliament any information about them.

### Unprincipled Manœuvres

IT is necessary to speak frankly about these manœuvres—they are unprincipled, and no loyal member of the United Nations should indulge in them or give them countenance. The Powers which have bound themselves to vindicate the rule of law in Korea are allies under the flag of the United Nations, and the first principle governing the conduct of allies in war is to make war and peace in common. Making peace includes talking peace. It is quite true that Russia is technically not engaged in the North Korean aggression, but Mr. Gromyko has declared that it is justified and Russia has denounced the action of the Security Council. She is therefore on the side of the aggressor, and any advances to her by the Powers which support the Security Council should be made in common.

## EPISODES OF THE MONTH

It is childish and worse to attempt to justify these approaches on the ground that they have been not unfavourably received in the Kremlin. Of course, they have not. Russia will draw all the advantage she can from any sign of weakness or disagreement on the United Nations front, and one of her dearest aims is to sow division between the Commonwealth and the United States or else between the Western Powers and their Asiatic brethren. Their united purpose is to prove that aggression does not pay, and it must be purged before the Powers arraigned against it embark on wider negotiations. If the aggression were only to be purged on terms, it would have paid a handsome dividend, and the whole policy of tentative aggression at one soft spot after another would have received encouragement.

### **The American People are Right**

**T**HIS is the attitude of the American people, and they are dead right about it. The President's Message to Congress has shown that neither men nor money nor the vast resources of American industry will be spared in vindicating the rule of law in Korea. Congress and the nation are solidly behind him ; Mr. Henry Wallace's abandonment of his long-standing support for appeasement to Russia is a portent proving their unanimity. They are bearing the brunt of the struggle ; our duty is to assist them with every resource which we can spare from other theatres, and to take no step which might even remotely suggest that we are not wholeheartedly with them.

### **British Weakness and Ambiguity**

**T**HE protracted illness of the Foreign Secretary at this critical period has been calamitous. The wheel of things has no regard for human weakness, and Ministers are responsible to their countrymen for dealing with events as they occur, whatever the personal inconvenience caused by them. The plain fact is that the conduct of this country's foreign relations has for a long time been lacking in balance, clear direction and moral fibre. Toughness and pedantic scrupulosity with France upon an issue which needed nothing but friendly handling ; weakness and ambiguous manœuvre in a crisis which calls above all things for firmness and clarity, because the very foundations of peace are shaken by it. A humiliating spectacle for a great country to present to the watching concert of nations.



## THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

### Discussion Between Friends

**N**OT that the problems of China, Formosa, the Pacific and South-East Asia can be left to drift at this moment. They urgently require discussion and concerted action ; but it must in the first place be discussion amongst friends and allies, not discussion by unconcerted and separate overture with their antagonists. A regional agreement between the Western, Asiatic and Pacific nations who stand for freedom and the rule of law can assuredly be reached ; but it requires a conference in which the political and military problems of the Far East and South-Eastern Asia can be weighed together. American opinion is clearly fluid upon that aspect of the situation, and it can probably be best attacked by consideration of the military commitments which Korea, Formosa, Indo-China, Malaya and South-East Asia in general may involve for the Powers concerned in them. This is where the combined Chiefs of Staff should be brought into play.

We repeat therefore that the war-time Committee should be reconstituted and instructed to advise on the world situation as a whole, since the Asiatic commitments of the Western Powers must be related to the Asiatic sentiment of which Mr. Nehru is the chief exponent, and also to the requirements of security in Western Europe, the Mediterranean and the Middle East. There will be no security against war so long as the Western Powers have world-wide commitments unrelated to the military strength of which they actually dispose—nor, let us add, until that strength has been considerably enlarged. There must be a combined plan, and action on that plan without the stultifying delays and personal controversies which have hitherto been so prominent.

### Parliamentary Plans

**T**HE Government's Parliamentary plans are not, it seems, to be affected by the tiresome world beyond the shores of this enchanted island, and Parliament itself is not to meet again until the middle of October—unless, of course, it is summoned earlier by the procedure usual in a time of emergency. We cannot by any stretch of the imagination regard this as proper. Parliament is, after all, in an old phrase, the watch-dog of the nation, and it ought to be able to growl and bark continuously when the nation is under the menace of war and its guardians to all appearance unfitted to repel it.



## EPISODES OF THE MONTH

It is frivolous to give the country the idea that the times permit of a recess of such duration, that we can calmly pursue our individual plans for taking holidays, hiking, sunning at the sea or killing birds and fish, raising wheat or pigs or wages, holding Party or other conferences, and all the rest of it, without regard to the fact that men in arms will be giving their lives for our security, and that what our Government does or does not do in the next two or three months may land us in a Third World War, for which we are even less prepared than we were for the two previous ones.

### While the Foundations Shudder

**I**N one of his essays, Robert Louis Stevenson paints a picture of cities built upon the side of fiery mountains whose inhabitants "are not a jot more impressed by the solemnity of mortal conditions than if they were delving gardens in the greenest corner of England."

There are serenades and suppers and much gallantry amongst the myrtles overhead; and meanwhile the foundation shudders underfoot, the bowels of the mountain growl, and at any moment living ruin may leap sky-high into the moonlight, and tumble man and his merrymaking in the dust.

There is a vivid picture of the atomic age, except that statesmen (who cannot be expected to control volcanoes) can do much to avert atomic war by warning and preparing their country against it. Our Ministers, however, are doing neither at the present moment. On the contrary, they seem to be just hoping for the best and playing with appeasement.

Mr. Churchill, by contrast, is doing his utmost to dispel illusion, and so is Mr. Eden. "I do not mean," Mr. Churchill said at Plymouth, "that war is inevitable. But I must not lead you to suppose that time is on our side, that we have only got to go on with our party quarrels and close our eyes and stop our ears to the facts of the situation to find that all will work out right in the long run. This might be a fatal delusion."

No one can honestly pretend that these are the accents of a warmonger; but that old cry is once again being used, and Mr. Eden has rightly turned his wrath upon it. "I do get a little riled," he said in the Commons debate on Korea, "and I beg honourable members to forgive me, when I hear those who, for most excellent reasons of their own, have never taken part in any conflict, constantly calling others warmongers." Nothing

## THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

in the way of demagoguery can be more unscrupulous; yet a whispering campaign of this character is rife all over the country.

### Mr. Eden and Premier Stalin

**M**R. EDEN'S stature has grown with every speech which he has made in the present Parliament. He is listened to with genuine respect upon the Socialist benches, and much may depend upon him in the immediate future.

In the same Korean debate, after the quiet but devastating comment already quoted upon those who set the country against preparation by denouncing its advocates as warmongers, he proceeded to dwell upon what he rightly called "the desperate seriousness of the situation"; and later he told the House of a talk with Stalin in December, 1941, when the German armies were thundering only forty miles from Moscow. Stalin gave his views upon the character of Hitler, saying that despite his great ability he did not know where to stop. "I suppose I smiled," continued Mr. Eden.

At any rate Marshal Stalin turned to me and observed, "You are smiling, and I know why you are smiling. You think that if we are victorious I shall not know when to stop. You are wrong. I shall know when to stop." To-night, I am wondering whether the time has not come when he might recall those words and when perhaps he might consider that the time has come when it would be well to stop.

It is an enlightening story and also, to our mind, an encouraging one, for it indicates that Stalin may be held by appeasement from strength, though never by appeasement from weakness and indecision.

### The Climate of Politics

**I**N this country the climate of politics is already changing, and, despite the illusion of "normalcy" which still prevails, it is becoming evident that the times are not suitable for another General Election. There looms, in place of it, a period of political and Parliamentary crisis which will come very quickly to a head when it is found that the United States will have nothing to do with peace by mediation till the aggression in Korea has received its deserts and a settlement can be approached without surrender of any kind to those who have provoked it. We have no doubt that this will be the attitude of the American people; and, as we have already said, we consider them right and honour them for it.

## EPISODES OF THE MONTH

On this assumption the British people must be brought to face the necessity of extended recruitment and increased defence expenditure. Such would, in fact, be the necessity even if the Korean war were more rapidly concluded than it is likely to be, because, like an infra-red ray, the crisis has uncovered some disagreeable truths and shown us how precarious our situation will always be till our defences and those of all the North Atlantic and Pacific Powers are made equal to their mutual commitments and to their obligations as members of the United Nations.

### National Government ?

**I**T was inevitable, in such circumstances, that there should be talk of a National Government. It is vague talk because it emanates for the most part from people with no experience of the actual working of the Parliamentary system. A National Government will be brought into being by the natural and traditional instinct of all Englishmen to close their ranks when they realise that their country is on the edge of disaster. But that realisation is always slow, and only events can precipitate it.

A National Government came rightly and naturally into being in 1940 because the country was at war and was convinced in almost all quarters that the Parties must work together for safety and ultimate victory. Such a Government came wrongly and unnaturally into being in 1931, because a considerable part of the country was not convinced of its necessity and regarded it as a disreputable political manoeuvre. The result was an embittering of the Left by loss of all its more moderate elements. Britain has for the last five years been expiating that unnecessary, shortsighted and pusillanimous contrivance; and the moral is worth remembering.

### No Repetition of 1931

**W**E contend therefore that the Parliamentary and Party system should be allowed to function in the normal manner unless and until it manifestly proves unequal to the emergency. If it is to be superseded, the whole country—including particularly the Trade Unions and other organs of the Left—must have been enabled to realise that the country's very life may be imperilled by its continuance. An overwhelming majority in both the greater Parties is at present hostile to the idea of Coalition; with their memories of 1931 the most active and

## THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

influential elements in the Socialist Party have, indeed, an almost pathological hatred for it.

To give them any ground for the belief that the sacrifices which may be indispensable have been imposed upon them by a political manœuvre rather than by a mortal peril threatening to annihilate all our most cherished traditions and achievements, including the Welfare State, would be to repeat the history of 1931, and might well prove as dangerous to the security of our institutions as war itself.

Neither Mr. Attlee nor any of his principal colleagues is likely to differ from the mass of their Party on this count. Those who broke the Party in 1931 have passed away, and all its present leaders are men who regarded the action of their leaders then as a crime. But the present leaders are also the men who took their whole Party willingly into the Coalition of 1940 at a time of national peril of which events had made the Party aware; and they must be trusted to rise to this emergency as they rose to that of 1940, if (as seems certain) it increases in gravity and looks to be prolonged.

### The Way of Democracy

FOR our part, we are profoundly distressed that Mr. Churchill and Mr. Eden are not at this moment controlling our policy in defence and international affairs. The country may, we fear, pay heavily for its failure to swing just a little further to the Right eight months ago. But that is the democratic system for which we stand, and it is idle to suppose that the democratic system can be saved by tricks to defeat its working in the normal fashion, because neither the Socialist nor the Conservative leaders are prepared to risk unpopularity as Party men. Dodges to evade this plain duty might be temporarily successful, though even that is uncertain with the country politically divided as it is to-day. What is certain is that they would create a bitterness and extremism under which true Parliamentary government might well be destroyed, when the war Coalition in due course broke down. We have, after all, moved some distance in that direction during the last five years, largely because we created the certainty of a future violent swing to the Left when Labour lost its most trustworthy anchors in 1931.

Let us, then, remember and be patient. Courage in speaking the truth combined with the force of events will shatter complacency and drive the truth home. In great emergencies this country has never failed to find and trust the best of its men.

## EPISODES OF THE MONTH

### A Great Speech

**A**T the Australian dinner of July 16, Mr. Menzies, in the presence of Mr. Churchill, Mr. Eden, Mr. Attlee, and most of Mr. Attlee's Cabinet, drove this moral home. His words were memorable and we put them on record here:—

One of the greatest dangers facing the free nations is to say, "Let's pretend." Let's pretend that the world is really at peace; let's pretend that we have a great world organisation whose resolutions give us protection; let's pretend that we live in some other world, not in this one. . . .

Never let us forget that whatever force has at this moment been placed at the disposal of the Security Council pursuant to its resolution is a national force. Naval units, gallant American soldiers and my own fighter units—these are not forces that exist in a neutral world. These are part and parcel of the national forces of their own countries.

All that we or the United States—all that Britain, borne down with her burdens, has to do is to say, "We do not need to have national forces: that is attended to," and the freedom of this world will be snuffed out in a day. It is for every nation concerned with the things we believe in to do what it can.

### The Prime Minister's Duty

**I**T is therefore Mr. Attlee's duty to decide at once on what is needed to enable this country to play a part worthy of its greatness in the Pacific, in Europe, and in the other areas where it has vital interests to defend. Parliament should be summoned as soon as possible—at the latest within a month—to consider the measures proposed. What then ensues lies in the lap of the gods. It will depend upon two factors—events and the quality of leadership shown.

### Dollar Surplus

**T**HE Commons debate on Korea was preceded by a statement from Sir Stafford Cripps on the sterling area's dollar surplus. Certainly, the figures are encouraging. During the second quarter of the current year the surplus amounted to 150 million dollars, as compared with a surplus of 40 million dollars for the first quarter, and a deficit of 63 millions for the corresponding quarter last year. Sir Stafford admitted that this surplus was in large part due to "those influences which are outside our control," and especially to "the continued high level of demand in the United States, particularly for the raw materials produced by the rest of the sterling area." But he spoke also of "the positive encouragement we have been giving to exports to the dollar area," and suggested that "devaluation played its part"



## THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

by making our exports more competitive in price. It is a little hard to see how this "positive encouragement" can be reconciled with the recent increased tax on petrol, while Mr. Boothby usefully reminded the House that Sir Stafford himself fought against devaluation until the last possible moment.

### Britain's Reserves

SIR STAFFORD went on to admit that we must take "a cautious view of the future." Britain's gold and dollar reserve stood, at the end of June, at 2,422 million dollars, as compared with 1,340 millions immediately before devaluation. Yet Britain is still extremely dependent on Marshall Aid, which accounts for approximately two-thirds of this increase. Even now, the reserve is less than 200 million dollars higher than the figure at which it stood on the eve of the European Recovery Programme, while the assistance available to us during 1950-51 will be appreciably less than that received in the previous year. Thus, even if the dollar demand for sterling area goods remains constant, we shall have a hard struggle to maintain our gold and dollar reserve at the minimum safety level.

It was also disconcerting to learn that "there has been an increase in our short-term liabilities in recent months, particularly to other sterling area countries. This is the direct result of the increase in their own earnings." Not unnaturally, Sir Stafford Cripps was asked what proportion of the sterling area surplus had been earned by the United Kingdom itself; but these figures were not yet available. They will be awaited with close interest.

### Stock-piling

ACTUALLY, it is extremely unlikely that the demand for sterling area goods will continue for long at its present level. "It would not be right," said Sir Stafford, "to count on a continuation of all the favourable factors which have governed our experience in the last six months. In the volatile world of international trade and finance there are bound to be fluctuations both downwards and upwards." We are glad to find Sir Stafford so clearly echoing the sentiments which we ourselves expressed in these columns a month ago. In this connection, an important point was raised by a well-informed Conservative back-bencher, Mr. Walter Fletcher. He asked how large a proportion of the



## EPISODES OF THE MONTH

sale of sterling-area commodities was for stock-piling, which might cease at any moment. For the moment, the Korean war is sustaining a high rate of demand—and high prices—for rubber and metals from South-East Asia. But the development of synthetic rubber production in America could alter the picture, while economists have long recognised that fluctuations in commodity stocks can prove one of the most important causes of economic instability.

### The Overall Balance

THE recent publication of the trade figures for June provides material for an estimate of Britain's overall balance of payments. The Economic Survey for 1950 assumed that Britain could achieve an overall surplus of £50,000,000 for the current year. But the half-yearly figures make it appear doubtful whether this target will be reached, since they reveal a net deficit in visible trade of £70,000,000. It is not yet possible to estimate invisible items with any precision, but it is unlikely that these will yield more than the £68,000,000 which was the figure for the second half of last year. To make matters worse, overseas expenditure will almost certainly show an increase in the months ahead. Thus Sir Stafford's injunctions to take a cautious view of the future applies with as much force to Britain's overall balance, as to her gold and dollar reserve. It is, indeed, highly doubtful whether Britain's overseas payments for the year will show any surplus at all.

### Flashback to 1947

ONE sentence from Sir Stafford Cripps's statement was most revealing: our reserves, he said, "are still far below the level that is necessary to enable us to face with equanimity all the sudden and substantial changes in external conditions which may take place." This is the first time that Sir Stafford has frankly admitted that British Socialism is the servant, and not the master, of its economic environment. It is ironic to recall the proud words of the Economic Survey for 1947, which assumed that "major uncertainties, especially in the international economic field" might soon become a thing of the past. And yet Socialist economists still speak—and write—as though the present export boom were due to planning, while Sir Stafford himself clings to the delusion that Britain can achieve absolute economic independence by 1952, "without any extraordinary outside help." To a Conservative, on the other hand, the lesson

## THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

of Sir Stafford's statement is absolutely clear. The balance of payments remains Britain's most intractable problem; it can only be solved if the sterling area strengthens its own resources; and Britain, as banker of the sterling area, must pursue a financial and fiscal policy which takes account of the less favourable trade conditions now imminent.

### It's That Man Again

FEW speeches can have been more minutely scrutinised than Mr. Strachey's deplorable effusion on the Schuman Plan. Indeed, the Commons debate, constantly re-treading the same well-worn ground, resembles nothing so much as the disputations of ecclesiastical scholars over the precise meaning of Chapter 44 of the Epistle of St. Clement. If anything, Mr. Strachey's case is the more straightforward. Whether or not the doctrine of Apostolic Succession can be squeezed from Clement 44, depends upon the precise translation of words which have been variously interpreted "other men of repute" (Lightfoot) and "other men accounted Apostles" (Dix). But the view that Mr. Strachey did not call the Schuman Plan a plot depends, not upon the meaning of certain words, but upon the question whether certain words were ever used at all: and, strangely enough, no one who was present when the speech was delivered has any recollection of their use except Mr. Strachey himself.

### What Did He Say?

THERE is no doubt whatever of what Mr. Strachey *did* say:

Is it not obvious that the real purpose of this plan was to put up a barrier against control of the basic industries of Europe by the European people? All this is an alarm bell to the great capitalist interests of Europe; therefore they put up this sort of plan, by which the real power in these industries is put in the hands of an irresponsible international body free from all democratic control.

If these are Mr. Strachey's opinions, it is a little hard to understand how he came to vote for a motion in the House of Commons which began with the words "That this House welcomes the initiative of the French Foreign Minister." But we have already had occasion to suggest that Mr. Strachey's conscience operates in a somewhat tortuous manner.

There is no doubt, either, of the concluding words of this passage: "Well, Labour had only, of course, to expose this plot in order to defeat it." The crux of the matter lies in the

## EPISODES OF THE MONTH

words which, as Mr. Strachey asserts, he used immediately before this last sentence: "I now turn to what happened in the House. The Tories tried to bring down the Government on this issue." These words were not in the hand-out which had been earlier delivered to the Press; none of the reporters who were present has any recollection of them. The weight of evidence is decidedly in favour of the view that Mr. Strachey used the word "plot" in connection with the Schuman Plan itself.

### A Personal Attack

**S**OME Socialist Members complained that Mr. Strachey was being subjected to a personal attack. We are grateful to Mr. Hogg for his forthright statement that there are occasions when a personal attack is entirely justifiable. We have, indeed, argued before now in these columns that there is no democratic freedom which is more essential than the freedom to criticise—and this applies to individual Ministers as well as to policies. It is certainly true that Mr. Strachey has been the target of a large amount of criticism during the last few years, but that is entirely his own fault. Very many people, both at home and abroad, will echo the comment of the Paris correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* on Mr. Strachey's performance: "It is difficult to remember a speech made by a British Minister in any Government which has given the impression of a mind moving at quite so low a level."

### The New French Government

**A**FTER the usual comings and goings of Ministerial personages in the Faubourg St. Honore, France has another Government with M. Plevin as Prime Minister and M. Schuman as Foreign Minister. The new feature in this Government is a renewal of Socialist participation on terms which mean an increase of social expenditure and (we fear) fresh difficulties on the critical subject of defence. The question of electoral reform is apparently not to be raised; but the scene is dominated by the shadow of the elections, which cannot be postponed beyond next year.

The impermanence of Ministries is a chronic disease in France. Her allies may well think that the reluctance of some Parties to consult the country is prolonging instability at a very critical time; but French domestic politics are France's own affair, and we have no desire for the "supra-national" Government which would put an end to them; nor do we believe that Frenchmen

## THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

would be happier than ourselves if their political liberties were restricted in that manner.

### The Schuman Plan

FRANCE is, however, so well accustomed to the lack of a Government and so well organised to dispense with one for considerable periods, that the latest Ministerial crisis has in no way impeded discussion of the Schuman Plan. The argument on that has been proceeding on the practical lines which sensible people anticipated, and it is abundantly clear that the United Kingdom Government could have taken its essential part in them without in any way compromising the independence of its constitutional authority, the King in Parliament.

The conference in Paris has been overshadowed by the international crisis on Korea, but some arrangement between Lorraine and the Ruhr remains vital to the peace of Europe. Germany will be at Strasbourg within a few days, and much light may then be thrown upon the prospects of closer co-operation between her and her neighbours. We trust that the British position will then be plainly set out—namely, functional co-operation in as many ways as are consistent with the complete and unfettered self-determination of our national sovereign body.

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# A FORTNIGHT THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

By DENYS SMITH

NOTHING can ever be quite the same in American and international affairs after the first two weeks of the Korean crisis. In the grey dawn of Sunday morning, June 25, an army for the first time since the Second World War openly marched across an international boundary line. The only common characteristic of the events which followed was that nobody expected them. Step by step, first with arms aid, then with 'planes and ships, then with ground troops, then with a partial mobilisation order, and finally, as the fateful fortnight closed, with orders to a complete home defence division and many other units to prepare for transfer to the battle front, the United States progressively committed herself more and more deeply to the world's first collective venture in preserving peace by meeting force with force. Nothing will be the same hereafter, save the tactics of the Communists and their friends and the mental processes of the isolationists in America, England and Europe.

The change in the mental and moral climate of America was the most dramatic in that country's experience. There was a transformation as sudden as that which followed the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour. But Pearl Harbour was a stunning blow to which there could only be one response: the war which America had first sought to avoid, then to fight indirectly and at a distance, had been brought to America's own shores. The steps taken to meet Communist aggression in Korea, on the other hand, were acts of conscious

will and choice, taken in defence of a remote country which previous policy had determined was not vital to American security.

Why did the Communists move against Korea, and why did America respond as she did? One thing which is certain is that the North Koreans did not move on their own initiative, but as pawns in the deadly game of international Communism. Another thing which is certain is that if Southern Korea could have been acquired by subversion, there would have been no need to use armed force. This conclusion should be placed alongside some of the pessimistic accounts from the battle front which present the South Koreans as having little interest in their own salvation. It is not only based on inductive reasoning, but on the facts as seen by an important State Department official, Mr. John Foster Dulles, who was in Southern Korea less than a week before the invasion was launched. He found that the Republic of Korea was growing in such a healthy way that its presence on the continent of Asia constituted a dangerous example for the Communist States. "The Communists seem to have felt that they could not tolerate this hopeful, attractive, experiment in democracy. They had found that they could not destroy it by indirect aggression because the political, economic and social life of the Republic was so sound that subversive efforts had been tried and had failed. The people were loyal to their Republic. Therefore, if this experiment in human liberty was to be



crushed, this could only be done by force."

Another reason why Korea had to be brought behind the Iron Curtain was that this was necessary for future Communist moves against Japan. The United States was making good progress in its task of turning Japan into a self-supporting, self-respecting democratic nation attached to the Western world. Efforts to prevent this by subversion in Japan and obstruction in the Far Eastern Commission, which sits in Washington, had failed. The only effect of a Soviet veto in the F.E.C., entrusted since 1946 with the task of making policy decisions for General MacArthur to carry out, was to clear the way for the United States to act on its own through "interim directives." The Soviets could protest and complain, but, since Japan was not divided like Germany into occupation zones, they could not frustrate. Japan, like Korea, was obviously an Asiatic country which could only be acquired by force. The Russians already held the island of Sakhalin, just to the north of Japan. If they could also take Korea to the south, then Japan would lie between the upper and lower jaws of the Russian bear.

Before contemplating their move against Korea the Communist overlords in the Kremlin must have weighed, and rejected, the likelihood of a vigorous response from the West. Up to a few minutes past noon on Tuesday, June 27, nobody in Washington believed that the American Administration would make any serious efforts to baulk the Communist threat and there was nobody else who could make it. The arms aid which had just been promised was looked upon more as something to salve America's conscience than as something to save Korea. The conviction that the Administration was unable or impotent

to act in the unexpected crisis was so widespread that it approached a feeling of certainty. Monday night has been described as "the great gloom"; everyone expected another Munich.

If the course actually taken under the President's leadership surprised Americans, still more must it have surprised and dumbfounded the Russians. Yet there were good reasons for American despondency. The United States Administration had, almost ostentatiously, put Korea outside the American Pacific security line. For military reasons, the Defence Department took the view that there should be no American troops or American bases in Korea, since it would initially be indefensible in the event of a major war. But the Defence Department believed that Formosa should be part of the Pacific security line. For political reasons the State Department took the view that there should be no American attempt to keep Formosa as part of the American security line, nor any effort to stop the Chinese Communists from over-running the last refuge of the Chinese Nationalist Government. But the State Department believed that every encouragement and support should be given to the Korean Republic. It would have been easy to follow the line of least resistance and resolve the problem by combining the negative, inactive, recommendations of the two Departments and leaving both Korea and Formosa to their fate. That was what was anticipated. Instead, the problem was resolved by adopting the two positive, active, recommendations: the South Koreans were to be supported and the island of Formosa defended. Moreover, in face of the Communist attack on Korea, both State and Defence Departments united to urge that this be done. The Russians certainly can never have expected such a development. In fact, shortly after



## A FORTNIGHT THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

the invasion of Korea, the propaganda from East Germany was hammering home to the West Germans the lesson they should learn from America's "abandonment" of Korea.

There was yet another reason for American despondency. Before the fateful fortnight a small but vocal section of European and Asiatic opinion was calling for "neutrality" between Russia and the United States. Russia's cold war against the free world was pictured as an American-Soviet struggle just as the American isolationists had treated the fight against Hitler as a British-German struggle in the early days of the Axis war. The Communists, having stolen and debased the word "democracy" had also stolen the word "peace." The American reaction to their cold war tactics was termed "aggression." The Communist-inspired Stockholm "peace" petition was being signed by thousands of deluded individuals, much as the "Oxford pledge" had been signed before the war. The same conditions which caused American discouragement must have given encouragement to the Kremlin and contributed to their decision. They must have thought their "Trojan Doves," as Mr. Acheson calls them, were proving effective.

Something should perhaps also be said of the apparently sharp political divisions in the United States. A campaign of exceptional virulence had been conducted for months against the State Department on the grounds that it was infiltrated with Communists who had, in particular, influenced American policy in the Far East and were responsible for a "soft" attitude towards Communism and its dangers. If the State Department were indeed Communist-ridden, the Russians had nothing to fear, while, even if the Russians knew the charges to be the nonsense they were, they might have counted

upon so acrimonious a dispute preventing national unity much as Germany of the Kaiser's day had counted upon the sharp divisions brought about in Britain by the Irish Home Rule issue.

Finally the United Nations appeared to be paralysed and moribund. Certainly no one in America, and still less therefore in Russia, imagined that it could act with such speed and determination. By Sunday afternoon, within twenty-four hours of the first official news of the North Korean attack, the Security Council had met and taken its first action. That night, in response to its resolution, General MacArthur sent the first transport planes of ammunition to the succour of South Korea with fighter protection.

We now come to the related question of why the United States responded as she did to this particular Communist threat. The United States did not put its military forces into Korea to secure a military position in the interests of its own security. As already pointed out, American military opinion had long judged Korea to be indefensible in any major war. The response was due to the recognition that here was something new in the field of Communist aggression. It was evidently a move in the long series of attempts planned by the Soviet Union to augment its power, but it was a move in a different degree. It was clear from the speed and efficiency of the attack that it had been prepared and premeditated for weeks, perhaps months. It was the bald naked use of force which Hitler employed. It destroyed the comfortable assumption that since the Communists had never challenged by armed force the line on which the armies of Russia and the West had come to rest when the fighting of the last war ceased, they never would do so.

The Soviets had increased or tried to increase their power up to this point

## THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

by two methods. They had taken over countries left by the West within the Russian sphere of influence by organising native Communist coups backed by the threat of the Red Army. Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Czechoslovakia had one by one lost their independence in this way. They had secondly attempted to take over countries left within the sphere of the West by subversion and in each case had failed. They came very near to success in Italy, they made great progress in France, but good sense and Marshall Aid had checked their efforts. Before Korea there had been three serious thrusts outside the Iron Curtain line, each one testing the West and its will to resist a little harder. The first case was in Persia, where the Red Army remained longer than it had any right. Quick use of the United Nations machinery led to its withdrawal and the so-called autonomous régime of Azerbaijan collapsed before the Persian constabulary. The guerilla war in Greece was a more vigorous effort and was accompanied by threats to Turkey. Russia, however, never quite supported the guerillas openly, but worked through her Balkan satellites. When Yugoslavia asserted its independence, a main source of guerilla support was withdrawn, and with the help of the American military aid programme the effort to dominate Greece was checked. The third case was the effort to oust the Western Powers from Berlin which was thwarted by the airlift. The blockade of Berlin was an act of the Red Army itself, but the Red Army was already on the spot and there was no overt movement of troops.

The attack on South Korea was different from any of these. It was no guerilla operation. It did not purport to be an internal revolt as in Greece or Persia. It was a thrust beyond the post-war power line by naked force.

An assumption of five years had been shattered. As President Truman phrased it, Communism had moved "from subversion to armed attack" and the face of the world was changed. It was not a question of saving Korea. Korea was the algebraical X which could stand for any country. If this new form of Communist expansion had not been met squarely, no country would have felt safe and the last hope of Western security would have been lost.

There was another equally important way in which the attack on Korea differed from other Communist thrusts. Korea was a child of the United Nations. Its independence was first promised in the Cairo Declaration of December, 1943, and reaffirmed in the Potsdam Declaration of July, 1945. Russia accepted this pledge when it entered the Japanese war a few days before the Japanese made their first surrender offer. To meet the immediate problem of Japanese troops in Korea, it was proposed that Russia should accept their surrender above the 38th parallel and the United States below. As Mr. Acheson stated, the Russians soon showed that they regarded this line, drawn for administrative convenience, "as a wall around their preserve." The Russians obstructed every effort to arrange for an independent united Korea. Finally, the United States laid the matter before the General Assembly, which in November, 1947, called for an election under the observation of a United Nations Commission. The Soviets refused to let the United Nations Commission enter their zone, so only the South Koreans could vote. The Republic of Korea was established in August, 1948, and at the end of the year was accepted by the United Nations as the only lawful government in Korea. Meanwhile the Russians established a so-called "Democratic People's Repub-

## A FORTNIGHT THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

lic of Korea" claiming jurisdiction over the whole country. This Russian puppet régime was created in complete defiance of the United Nations. The invasion of South Korea was therefore a defiance of the United Nations in an area in which the United Nations had already been defied. If armed aggression against a nation brought into being by the United Nations, with a Government elected under United Nations supervision, were allowed to pass unchecked, then the United Nations might as well have closed its doors. Its authority and continued existence were at stake. The United States recognised this fact, and the nations of the free world, including India, recognised it too.

Military success in Korea, as this is written, seems far away. But a more important victory has been won. One way to appreciate the importance of what has already been accomplished is to imagine what the situation would have been if the doubts of "gloomy Monday" had been fulfilled. If the effort to save Korea had not been made, the grand coalition of the West would have fallen apart, the common security of the Western world would have been unattainable. Hesitation, vacillation or appeasement in the face of so naked and obvious an act of aggression, observed and reported as such by a United Nations Commission on which wererepresentatives of Australia, China, India, El Salvador, Turkey, the Philippines and France, would have undone the work of five years spent in building up areas of strength in the free world. The cement had not yet had time to harden and the structure might easily have come apart. One by one the cowed nations of Europe and Asia would have crept cap in hand to the Kremlin, seeking the terms of their captivity. But the faith of the non-Soviet world has now been confirmed

and renewed. It has never been more united, nor has the will to resist the menace of aggressive Communism been stronger. There are dangers ahead, but they cannot be more terrifying than the slow crumbling of the spirit and defences of the free world which would have followed an abject acceptance of Communist aggression in Korea.

The United Nations has won a new respect, particularly in America, where many were coming to regard it as little more than a burdensome and expensive memorial to the shattered hopes which existed at the end of the war. The Korean crisis has both demonstrated its usefulness to its membership and given it a new confidence in its own power. The United Nations has shown that it can act with speed, though, had Russia not boycotted the Security Council, this would have been impossible. But at least it has been made clear that the frustrations and failures of the past were due, not to defects in the United Nations machinery, but to the shortcomings of its Member States.

There are several other important consequences of the action taken in Korea. Though, as part of a deliberate effort to localise the crisis, nothing has been officially said to pin responsibility for the invasion on Russia, no one really doubts that responsibility. It will therefore hardly be possible now to contemplate peace treaties with Japan or Germany which involve the complete withdrawal of the troops of both sides. The Russian troops left behind them in Korea a completely trained and well-armed Communist force, as they will undoubtedly do in Eastern Germany. As far as Japan is concerned, it is now being frankly recognised that the complete and permanent disarmament of Japan is an error. The United States (for in practice it will be the United States) cannot commit herself for all time to

## THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

the defence of an unarmed Japan.

But the most important consequence is that no one can now doubt that any Communist march across the frontiers of the non-Soviet world—be it Turkey, Persia, or even Yugoslavia—would be met with collective force whatever the consequence. The Western Powers will no longer behave like lemmings, intent on following a path to their own destruction.

There is no certainty that the Korean conflict can be localised, but the United States at any rate does not believe that Russia wants a major war. If the move into Southern Korea was made in the expectation that there would be no real effort by the United States or the United Nations to protect Korean independence, then there is no need to fear that the Korean episode is a subtle plot to involve the Western Powers in a remote area in preparation for an all-out drive against Europe or Asia. The Soviet Government is interested in the spoils of war, and so far they have been able to obtain them without war, even without bargaining. They were there for the taking. There are some who think that international Communism is like a man on a bicycle. It must either maintain its momentum or fall. If it remained static behind the post-war power line, Titoism, or even democracy, might weaken its hold on the nations on the periphery of the Russian sphere of influence. This latter development is at least considered possible in the United States and is one of the reasons why the Russian formula for "co-existence" based upon an agreement to give Russia full freedom to dominate its own side of the power line will not be accepted. The United States will not move beyond the power line, but if other nations wish to break away, it will certainly not collaborate with Russia to prevent them doing so.

In time it hopes that, as the strength of the non-Soviet world grows, there might be some hope of bargaining, that is to say of reaching an agreement with Russia which she would keep.

Accepting, therefore, the thesis that Russia was not seeking a third world war, the United States has been most careful to do nothing which would commit Russia irrevocably to the cause of North Korea. It has so far in all its official statements accepted the fiction that the North Koreans acted on their own. It has noted, as a fact of possible significance, that North Korea and Albania are the only two satellite countries with which Russia has not signed mutual defence pacts. It even went so far as to seek assurances from Russia that it would not make the North Korean cause its own. A note delivered to the Russian Foreign Office on June 27 said, "in view of the generally known fact of the close relations between the USSR and the North Korean régime, the United States Government asks for an assurance that the USSR will not take upon itself the responsibility for this unprovoked and unjustified attack and that it will use its influence with the North Korean authorities towards immediate withdrawal of their invading forces." This two-fold request was ignored in the Russian reply two days later. But at least Russia did not assume open responsibility for the North Korean attack and thereby for its success.

Korea may mean that Russia is probing and testing the West. It may be the start of an intensified campaign to harass the West at many points to bring about its eventual exhaustion. It may even be the prelude to an Atomic Armageddon. But till the Korean challenge was taken up, Communism had been winning the victory without all-out war. For the near certainty of slow defeat has now been



## A FORTNIGHT THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

substituted the high probability of winning through to world peace. As President Truman said after his great decisions, "We hope we have acted

in the cause of peace; there is no other reason for the action we have taken."

DENYS SMITH.

## FAMILY PARTY IN CANADA

By THE HON. JOHN GRIGG

THE Seventh Imperial Press Conference was held in Canada during the month of June. It opened on the 8th at Quebec and ended on the 27th at Toronto. Of the twenty or so delegates from the United Kingdom I had the extreme good fortune to be one.

"The Seventh Imperial Press Conference" sounds pompous and formidable. It suggests a roll of drums and the smell of moth-ball. It does not instantly call to mind a happy family party. Yet this is just what the recent Conference turned out to be.

About sixty delegates assembled from outside Canada—including ten from the Colonies—and, although wives were rationed, there was a welcome contingent of them as well. In addition, many Canadian journalists and press magnates participated; indeed, the Canadian section of the Empire Press Union were the hosts and did their job as such magnificently. Business sessions, when they had to occur, were well staged: every delegation was suitably labelled and the loudspeaker almost invariably worked. But it was well appreciated that the Conference had other and perhaps more important objects than to confer. Expeditions and conducted tours were arranged, which gave delegates clear first-hand evidence of Canada's present and future greatness: while banquets, receptions,

garden parties and other agreeable social functions made it easy for people to mix, for tongues to be loosed, and for the first barriers to friendship to be quickly surmounted.

If the association of peoples represented at this Conference were more addicted to matters of form than to matters of substance, the association would soon break up—or rather, would have broken up already. But formalism has on the whole been kept within bounds, and the Conference was acting in accordance with established tradition when it advised that the *Empire Press Union*, which was founded over 40 years ago, be now renamed the *Commonwealth Press Union*. "Commonwealth" is now accepted as the compendious term for both the Commonwealth of Nations on the one hand and the Colonial Empire on the other. And the proposed new name would no more imply the exclusion of Colonial newspapers from the "Commonwealth" Press Union, or of Colonial delegates from future "Commonwealth" Press Conferences, than the old name has implied the exclusion of newspapers or delegates from the Dominions. The Canadian Prime Minister, Mr. St. Laurent, remarked with postprandial elegance that while "a rose by any other name would smell as sweet," it must be careful not to "blush unseen" or "waste its

## THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

fragrance on the desert air"; and he was assured that the Commonwealth Press Union would do neither. (But who, after all, would ever expect a journalist to blush?)

Kipling's pessimism about the chances of bringing East and West together this side of Eternity might have been modified if he could have attended this Conference. While the Afrikaans newspapers all refused to send delegates to a Conference still calling itself "Imperial," India, Pakistan and Ceylon, undeterred by such a pettifogging verbal obstacle, were all ably represented—and so, of course, were the British-South African papers).

Not only did the new Asiatic nations of the Commonwealth send delegates, who were both eloquent in debate and charming in private conversation: but—as a further proof of open-mindedness and good-will—Mr. Ian Stephens, Wykehamist and Yogi, Editor of the great *Calcutta Statesman*, appeared as a member of the Indian delegation! And no one who heard it will ever forget Mr. Durga Das's speech on the training of journalists, in which he called for a regular exchange of personnel—a "two-way traffic"—between British (in the broadest sense) and Indian newspapers, so as to give Englishmen and others a better understanding of life and thought in India, and at the same time protect India against the dilution and debasement of English as a *lingua franca*. (Mr. Durga Das is Mr. Devadas Gandhi's chief colleague and Joint Editor on the *Hindustan Times*.)

It is, moreover, quite possible that India, Pakistan and Ceylon may act together as hosts to the next Conference. Strong individual hopes have been expressed that this arrangement may be made, and Australia—which has already given a definite invitation, supported by New Zealand—would be

willing to stand down next time in favour of the Asiatic nations.

The longest and most earnest discussion at the Conference was devoted to the subject of Press freedom. The attention of delegates had already been drawn to the dangerous aspects of a United Nations draft convention on this subject; a clumsy attempt to assert a general principle had necessitated saving clauses which could in effect be used to stultify the principle. A resolution was therefore eventually passed by the Conference endorsing a previous statement by the Council of the Empire Press Union that "the Press should enjoy by right the full freedom of expression that is secured to every individual, which freedom should in no case be restricted save for specific transgression . . . of the known and generally applicable law." Saving clauses were attached even to this statement, but they were drafted in such a way as to leave the smallest possible loophole for arbitrary action. And Press rights were made to stand upon the firm ground of individual rights, and were not asserted as a special prerogative, such as the notorious *droit administratif*—familiar, perhaps, to some of the libertarians of Lake Success.

A side-wind during this debate on Press freedom was the question whether or not—bearing in mind the recent Report of the Royal Commission in the United Kingdom—Press Councils were desirable. This evoked much able and fervent oratory, including a striking speech by Mr. L. P. Scott of the *Manchester Guardian*, in which he reminded his audience, somewhat to their surprise, that they were not perfect! But at the end of it all the question remained unanswered. And the longer it remains so, probably, the better for all concerned.

It should be added that four repre-



## FAMILY PARTY IN CANADA

sentatives of American journalism attended, and took part in, the discussion on Press freedom. Their presence was welcomed by all and it seemed quite natural that they should behave, and be treated, as members of the family.

Some mention has already been made of names; and this is always invidious. But no record of the Conference would be complete without special note being taken of one or two leading personalities.

The leader of the United Kingdom delegation and the President of the Conference was Colonel John Astor, whose modesty and charm combined with shrewdness and long experience—and combined, too, with the delightful qualities of Lady Violet Astor—were admired by all. Great praise is also due to the Canadian impresarios, led by Senator Rupert Davies, who takes time off from legislation and the *Kingston Whig-Standard* to perform the duties of a High Sheriff in his native Wales. At the last business session it was proposed by Mr. Kerr of New Zealand that Colonel Astor and Senator Davies be made Honorary Life Members of the Empire Press Union, and this proposal was enthusiastically supported. The only Hon. Life Member to date has been Sir Harry Brittain, who had the vision and determination to found the Empire Press Union and to organise the first Imperial Press Conference in 1909, and who, *mirabile dictu*, was one of the more vigorous members of the British

delegation to the latest Conference! He has every reason to be proud of his brainchild, now so mature and thriving; and his fellow-delegates have good cause to remember his fine rendering of *John Peel* at midnight on the St. Lawrence!

The last business session of the Conference was dominated by the warm, compelling presence of Sir Keith Murdoch, the leader of the Australian delegation and the acknowledged *doyen* of Australian journalism. It seemed to him a pity that Imperial (or Commonwealth) Press Conferences should take place only once every five years, as had so far been the practice, world wars permitting. Why should there not in future be a Conference every *three* years? To those who had been privileged to attend if only one such Conference, and in whom gratitude and appreciation were overflowing, this suggestion had an irresistible logic. The matter will of course have to be duly considered by the Council, and there may be difficulties to overcome. But who can doubt the immense value of more frequent Commonwealth gatherings—especially such as bring together those whose business it is to inform and even, perhaps, to influence the public mind? Your representative at the Conference can at least attest what a marvellous experience it has been for him, and will rejoice at any sign that such an opportunity may in future be more widely and more often given to journalists at home and in the Commonwealth.

JOHN GRIGG.

# IS COMMUNISM SPREADING IN FRANCE?

By ANDRÉ STIBIO

THE drama of French political life to-day centres on the situation which Communism has created. Although in recent years important trade union elements have withdrawn from its tyrannical control, Communism still dominates very large sectors of French working-class life through the imposing machine of the (*Confédération Générale du Travail*). Communist activity, however, is not limited to the working-class population of the big cities. It has also penetrated certain agricultural areas, where it foments and sustains a spirit of ceaseless demands and discontent. The working-class extreme Left is inspired by the Communist Party as formerly by the Socialist Party. Its orientation, the themes of its propaganda, its orders, come from the Cominform. As a result, the State, which is compelled to defend itself against the attack thus conducted against it from abroad, finds to its sorrow that it is involved at home in a struggle against French workers who have been carried away by this propaganda and misled by these orders. The State is obliged to resort to repression; but repression costs it dear, in so far as it risks striking innocents and sincere believers, while aiming at those (whether known or unknown) who are really responsible for Communist action.

It is hard to say with certainty whether Communist stock has really fallen in France, or whether, on the contrary, it has kept its strength intact. The local elections which have taken place in recent months would seem to

show that Communism has neither lost ground nor gained it. One must not judge, however, by the electoral barometer alone, particularly if one wants an exact guide. In fact, Communism has gained in some sectors and lost in others, while in any case its influence, its penetrative power, its "edge," are no longer (nor by a good deal) what they were immediately after liberation. On balance, the positive and negative elements in the situation to-day are probably as follows.

First, the displacement of Communists from the Government has prevented French Communism from continuing the work of infiltration which it had been pursuing eagerly and successfully wherever the intervention of its ministerial representatives made this possible. Whole segments of public administration and public undertakings had in fact passed more or less completely under the control of puppets whom the Communist leaders put in key positions. The nationalised coal mines and electricity supply, most of the nationalised aircraft concerns, the State-run apprenticeship and trades training scheme, the State system of social insurance, as well as other activities, had fallen in this way into Communist hands. The evil had gone very far when the Communists lost their Ministries. Since then, thanks above all to the work of men like M. Jules Moch, who was a courageous and tenacious Minister of the Interior, the Communist tide has slowly ebbed. In the field of industrial production the

## IS COMMUNISM SPREADING IN FRANCE ?

Socialist Minister, Robert Lacoste, has cleansed the administrative sectors under his control. To some extent it has been the same everywhere.

French Communism also suffered a hard blow when the C.G.T., one of its most formidable instruments, was split. This breach at once produced a deep cleavage among the workers generally. Communism must now reckon with working-class elements which are openly hostile. In fact, it is again plugging continuously the slogan "Unity of Front" in the hope of one day creating again, and to its profit, the solid working-class *bloc* which now exists no longer. Socialists have formed a separate group of trade unions known as the "*C.G.T. Force-Ouvrière*." Other elements have formed themselves into independent or autonomous unions. There is also a powerful Confederation of Christian Workers. While trade unionism is split in this fashion—and it will stay split as long as Communism itself subordinates working-class needs and genuine trade-union demands to orders from a foreign country—no general strike will be possible in France.

Communism has now stopped resorting to a form of struggle which it is no longer in a position to conduct victoriously. It is making every effort to reconstitute working-class unity. But the workers are suspicious of it. Only a policy of social reaction would now bring back to Communism the working-class elements it has lost. While waiting for or anticipating such a stroke of good luck, it is and will continue to be content with attacks like those at Brest or Nice carried out under the direction of Soviet agents by elements which, though few in numbers, were resolute in opposing the unloading of American arms or the dispatch of military supplies to Indo-China. The Government has asked Parliament for new powers so as

to be in a position to repress such attempts at sabotage.

The French Communist Party is thus unquestionably encountering difficulties which it does not attempt to hide—as the course of its recent National Congress showed. Most of the speakers, and notably Maurice Thorez—who was made the object of a kind of deification after the manner of Stalin both during this congress and on the occasion of his fiftieth birthday shortly afterwards—flayed the lukewarmness and bungling of certain sections of the party. It had been vaguely known for several months that a severe purge was going on at various levels of the party hierarchy. The events of the Congress confirmed this knowledge. Those who were too old or too soft or without sufficient understanding of the new line demanded by Moscow on the problems of Peace According To Stalin were replaced by younger and more dynamic militants. More generally, a purely working-class element tended to replace the intellectuals, who were judged too independent or too unstable.

What Communists call "self-criticism"—that is, public avowal of, and apology for, errors committed—has raged in the highest levels of this hierarchy ever since the scientist Joliot-Curie himself, with the object of having an earlier and insufficiently conformist declaration forgotten, had made an act of total submission to Soviet dogmas about the atomic bomb. After this act, the French Government retired M. Joliot-Curie, who had previously been High Commissioner of Atomic Research in France. He had declared at the Communist Congress that he would not place science at the disposal of his own country if it ever went to war with the Soviet Union. There was not even any question that M. Joliot-Curie would ask himself what were the rights and wrongs of such a

conflict. By definition, it would be M. Joliot-Curie's own country which would be wholly wrong in advance, Russia being innocent *à priori* and as of right.

Reduced to its own adherents—whose visibly diminished strength is reflected in the declining sales of the party Press—Communism would have only scanty means of action. Hence it is more than ever essential for it to win the help or sympathy of circles lying far beyond itself. During the occupation it did this by forming the "National Front," into which, as will be remembered, it drew members of the *bourgeoisie*—barristers, doctors, writers—who were in no sense Communists. But it was Communists who pulled the strings of that organisation, which, however, was unable to survive the day when everyone in France returned to his pre-war political position. But it must not be forgotten—for it is a striking fact, and one which marks an epoch—that for several months a writer of the standing of M. François Mauriac served as representative of this "National Front," whose real moving spirit was the obscure M. Pierre Villon, now a Communist Deputy, and among the most active and most dominating.

At present the Party is trying to re-establish this fringe of sympathisers, who are indispensable if Communists are to exploit thoroughly the pacifism of many Frenchmen, collect their signatures against the atomic bomb, and, of course, condemn without truce or respite the "Marshall-inspired" policy of the West. A propaganda of this character is not entirely without effect. The so-called "progressive" political groups—that is, undeclared Communists who flank and screen overt Communism—attract certain priests, professors and scientists. This is an unfortunate fact which

should be noted as a sign of the times. Communism remains the temptation of many French intellectuals, whether because they see in it the only party of the extreme Left, or because the collapse of Christian values or the gradual decline of classical humanism has created among many men of good will a spiritual vacuum which exposes them to the kind of religion in reverse and culture without liberty that Marxism is. This is a point of special gravity which rightly disquiets those who fear lest Communism should extend its shadow wherever the light of faith (according to some) or of critical reason (according to others) is on the wane. On all other planes, however, and at all social levels, Communism, by whipping up a ferment of demands and discontents, acts as a solvent of national cohesion. To use General de Gaulle's strong phrase, it rubs salt into all our wounds.

Communism in France is thus too complex a phenomenon for a mere policy of repression to be enough. As a start, it would be desirable to reduce the strength of its general staff—i.e., its Parliamentary representation. If direct balloting by constituencies were adopted, out of the present total of 180 Communist Deputies, only about forty would remain. For the Communist Party this would be a loss of influence so considerable that the logic of disinfection from Communism would make one wish to begin here. Unfortunately, the various parties forming the present parliamentary majority are having some difficulty in agreeing on electoral reform. The discussion of this point is in abeyance. Moreover, there will be no real cure for Communism unless there are again formed in France a working-class party which is strictly national in character and a trade unionism which is freed from the yoke of the C.G.T. All this presup-

## IS COMMUNISM SPREADING IN FRANCE?

poses Governments knowing how to harmonise authority and justice, as well as parties which refrain from demagoguery of any kind.

Finally, Communism must be progressively neutralised by a less stereotyped educational policy, unless the basic values of culture and humanism are restored to strength, and unless citizens return to the principles and duties of their position as members of the French national community. Only what is replaced is effectively destroyed: no truth has ever been more applicable both to Communism

when attacking *bourgeois* societies and to patriotic French feeling when striving to save itself from Communism. Speaking of Gaullism and of Communism, General de Gaulle said one day: "It will either be them or us." If Gaullism is understood in the largest sense of a new mustering of the national forces, this judgment expresses the simple and brutal truth.

In any case, the very strength of Communism in France requires as a counterweight the union of all parties which put strictly French needs first.

ANDRÉ STIBIO.

## GENERAL SMUTS AT HOME

By VISCOUNTESS MILNER

IN 1924 Lord Milner and I paid a visit to South Africa; and it was while we were staying with Lord Athlone and Princess Alice that we went to lunch with General and Mrs. Smuts in their country home. It was an interesting occasion. I knew General Smuts fairly well; and Lord Milner, of course, knew him very well indeed.

Irene is 15 miles from Pretoria. The road there is bad and we had to allow over an hour to get there. General Smuts's farmhouse is an old officers' mess hut, dating from the Boer War. He bought it from the Government when Irene ceased to be a camp. It is unlovely, but very spacious, having three very large sitting-rooms in it, besides plenty of bedrooms. He gave £300 for it and has certainly not troubled to beautify it in any way. It stands on the land with no drive up to

it and no garden round it. His farm is about 2,000 acres of land and is said to be a good one. We did not see anything of this. It had the usual air of Boer disorder, and the cattle we caught sight of were poor.

We drove up on the grass to the entrance. There is a wide verandah all round the house, and here on the steps we saw a few people assembled. General Smuts ran down to meet us and welcomed us with great cordiality. He introduced us to the party, which consisted of his wife, brother, sister-in-law, Mrs. Hofmeyr, Miss Rowntree, his secretary, and his nephew (a former Rhodes scholar).

Mrs. Smuts is a short, stout, active-looking woman, with black curly hair cut short all over her head. She has very bright, intelligent eyes and is evidently a ruling spirit, Smuts calling her attention to all points of interest in



## THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

the conversation and referring to her a good deal. She is intensely natural, and very easy to interest. I thought she was a little flustered by us when we first came. She was for years very bitterly anti-British and, though she is said to have since changed her views, I think she felt a moment's awkwardness when we arrived. This she overcame in the kindly bustle of hospitality. She showed us to a room to wash our hands and brought us the hot water herself.

We went in to lunch immediately, and Smuts, saying "We must celebrate," gave his nephew a bottle of champagne to open. Very good champagne it was, too, though one doesn't feel very champagny at lunch. I sat next General Smuts and Alfred next Mrs. S., one off the General. Quantities of dishes were then put in front of Mrs. Smuts—Babootje (a Malay dish), meat, rice, two vegetables and potatoes. She helped us all and passed us our plates, while a barefooted Kaffir girl ran in and out and brought in the fresh supplies from the kitchen. Mrs. Smuts told me afterwards that she ran this big house, which is always full of people, with two Kaffir maids, adding, "I do a great deal of the work myself." And certainly the whole household was a lesson in simple life and abundant warmhearted hospitality.

At lunch Alfred and General Smuts talked high politics—European. I could see that Smuts was hungry and thirsty for talk about the great affairs he had been so closely concerned with during the war and about which no one in South Africa knows anything except himself. I was very anxious that they should have a time together, so after lunch I engaged Mrs. Smuts and as many others as I could in talk, while Alfred and General Smuts went at it hammer and tongs on the sofa in the sitting-room. They had both so much

to ask and to hear about each other's continents!

Presently a move was made to General Smuts's study, a large room, entirely furnished with books that went up to the ceiling, and three flags, an old Vieur Kleur and two German flags captured in the war. They were all rapidly disintegrating with moth and decay and I told General Smuts he'd lose them. He called out, "Momma, listen to this," and repeated my remarks and advice, but I don't somehow see Mrs. Smuts with a needle. She always calls him "Obas" or "Oupa" and he calls her "Momma," after the Dutch custom, with many repetitions, and listening to them I remembered a story about Rhodes that Jameson told me. It was at the time when Rhodes was working with the Dutch and his patience in their company seemed unlimited. Jameson, marvelling at the way Rhodes bore their rather dull talk and egotism, said, "Why, Rhodes, you seem to quite enjoy your company!" Rhodes turned upon him with a dark look, "I hate their paas and their maas," he said. I had never taken in the inner meaning of this story until I heard the "Oupas," "Obas" and "Mommias" flowing round the Smuts hearth!

I had regretfully to tear Alfred away. I had to speak to the Guild of Loyal Women at a reception they were giving for me, otherwise we would have stayed for hours. We greatly liked our time at the Smuts's, and were only very sorry we could not go and stay there for the weekend as they suggested.

Smuts is impressive in his own house. He is an excellent host. Mrs. Smuts said several times that we must take them as we found them and that they made no difference for us. Smuts is much too certain of himself even to think of making a difference between one set of people and another. He



## GENERAL SMUTS AT HOME

gives you his whole attention and devotes his great social gifts to entertaining you, without *arrière pensée*. He is immensely quick to know what is in your mind. I have known only two other men with the same powers of divination—Rhodes and Kitchener. For instance, at lunch Smuts said to me, "I know you think I am anti-French." Now I had never said anything about this to him, but, on being challenged, I answered, "Well, so you are."

That was the note I wrote on the

day of our visit in 1924. I shall not forget the library at Irene, with the Vieur Kleur (the flag of the old Transvaal Republic) hanging over General Smuts's head as he sat at his desk.

We saw him again in Cape Town. A very garbled version of what Lord Milner had said in these talks found its way into the Press after his death a few months later. All that is ancient history, but the image of Smuts in his library remains.

V. G. MILNER.

(World Copyright.)

## WICKETANA

By D. R. JARDINE

**C**ONTROVERSY over the wicket prepared for the first Test Match against the West Indies at Manchester has died a natural death. The visitors' outstanding success at Lord's has taken pride of place as a more absorbing topic.

There should never have been any loose talk capable of carrying an innuendo that anyone had been guilty of any partial practice. The Lancashire Cricket Club, through its groundsmen and the instructions given to him, may not have produced the conditions which it and the public generally expected. But the writing was on the wall, unless rain fell, from the behaviour of the wicket in the Lancashire-West Indies match which immediately preceded the Test Match—conditions which, incidentally, profited our visitors not a little.

It is possible, of course, that the four Tests to be played might produce

no definite result or a desperately close finish. In this case the controversy might be resurrected. For this reason, it may not be out of place to dig a little deeper into the matter at a time when both sides have won one match. Over the week-end of the match the West Indies captain made his attitude perfectly clear, as he had every right to do. In fact, he said that he deplored the wicket, and one can at least understand this without agreeing with it. Against the West Indies captain was the fact that nearly 1,000 runs were scored in the match, so that there can be no pretending that the wicket was unplayable or anything approaching it. In his favour is the fact that, nevertheless, for a match scheduled to last five days, it was not the type of wicket calculated to last anything like that period.

One could go further on these grounds and stress the point, if it needs stressing, that wickets which do not

last, ordinarily are open to the genuine criticism that they are apt to emphasise the advantage of the side winning the toss, an advantage which is generally agreed to be already amply sufficient in itself.

The remarkable thing about the Manchester wicket, however, was that it was agreed on all sides that it played worst throughout the first day. Further, that as the match was played, it would, in all probability, have paid the home side to put the visitors in on winning the toss—a policy which, one understands, was never even considered.

The fact remains that the West Indians are suspicious of wickets and the “magic” which groundsmen can supposedly bring to bear upon grass and turf, of which most of us know so very little.

Some readers may remember the West Indies tour of Australia in 1930-31 which followed their promotion to Test Match rank two years earlier in this country. After a lapse of nearly 20 years one hopes one may safely say, without hurting anyone's feelings, that until nearly the end of the 1930-31 tour in Australia the West Indians had proved a very great disappointment. So much so that the natural conclusion was that promotion to playing Test Matches had been given too easily and too soon. Of the first four Test Matches played in Australia, no less than three had been lost by the large margin of an innings, while the other had been lost by ten wickets. Indeed, the fourth Test Match only lasted a couple of days. The story goes that, after the debacle in the fourth Test Match at Melbourne, gloom reigned supreme in the West Indian camp; and while not attempting to excuse their poor showing, it did emerge in the course of conversation between certain of the Australian authorities and individual West Indians that the latter

were desperately disappointed by the dissimilarity between Australian and West Indian wickets. The West Indians said that before the tour they had been led to believe that the wickets were very similar, but that this had not turned out to be the case.

Some of us now know that the Australian wickets at the time were themselves going through a process of transformation, but when the West Indians were asked to detail the differences, they said in effect that they had been surprised and disappointed by the slowness of Australian wickets compared to those in the Caribbean.

Unofficially, one understands, they were asked whether, if it could be arranged, they would like to have a fast wicket for the last Test Match at Sydney, and, as may be imagined, they jumped at the suggestion. In practice, two wickets were prepared, one fast and one slow, and on the West Indies captain being offered his choice of wickets before tossing, he unhesitatingly chose the fast.

The fifth and last Test Match played on this fast wicket was remarkable. As was customary at that time, the match was a timeless Test to be played to a finish. Yet both innings of the West Indians were declared closed—the first at 350 for 6 and the second at 124 for 5. The explanation, of course, was that at both these junctures rain had fallen and the chances were that the wicket would prove stickily awkward, and this, in fact, turned out to be the case. As a result, the Australians were dismissed for 224 and 220 runs respectively, leaving a side, by then accustomed to defeat in a single innings, victors by a bare 30 runs.

To most people this surprising result needed no further explanation than the rain which fell twice so opportunely for the West Indians and inopportunely for the Australians. But, to a side



CRICKET PLAYED NEAR WHITE CONDUIT HOUSE, ISLINGTON, 1787.  
THIS AFTERWARDS BECAME THE M.C.C. AND WAS TAKEN TO LORDS.

(Picture Post Library)

which, with the exception of the last Test Match to which we have referred, had enjoyed a humiliatingly unsuccessful tour, the temptation to stress the importance of the wicket which had seen their solitary triumph, must have been irresistible.

One of the delights of cricket is the memories it conjures up, which, not infrequently, get exaggerated rather than minimised with the help of hearsay and the passage of time. It would not be unnatural, therefore, that when faced with such a surprising wicket at Old Trafford, the West Indian captain should express his views thereon and do so forcefully. Nor is he alone in doing so, for, as I write, the Sussex captain has joined in his protest.

#### SIR PELHAM WARNER'S BOOK

Sir Pelham Warner has celebrated his Presidency of the Marylebone Cricket Club this year by the production of this book.\* The infant pro-

duced is not unworthy of its auspices, and one can safely say, amid the welter of cricket books being produced, this one, at least, should have a familiar corner in many shelves.

Naturally, the bulk of the book is factual, but the accounts of each match are, each in its own way, gems of selective reporting worthy of the brevity of Cæsar combined with the colour of Livy.

The stately progress and procession of these yearly matches make one think in terms of history and great names of books one associates therewith. For instance, *Decline and Fall* is only narrowly averted for the period ending in 1864 by the advent of W. G. Grace in 1865. As far as the Gentlemen were concerned, the decline had been all too obvious. W. G. not only averted the "Fall," but as far as the Gentlemen were concerned, inaugurated a period comparable to that textbook of Hassel's which, if memory serves, was entitled *The Ascendancy of France*.

There never was, in the reviewer's opinion, a sounder, saner judge of

\* *Gentlemen v. Players 1806-1949*. By Sir Pelham Warner (George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd. 21s.).

cricket than the late A. H. Evans. Sir Pelham's book has at long last helped me to realise something of the prodigious impact the Graces had on English cricket, for it was A. H. Evans himself, who is one of the few Gentlemen to have bowled unchanged throughout an innings of the Players, who once said, pointing at his own preparatory school second eleven: "If only they could have been guaranteed to hold their catches, W. G. and E. M. Grace could have played the rest of England with them."

Quite rightly, too, J. B. Hobbs is

featured as taking up and carrying on with the bat where W. G. left off, and the comparison on p. 399 between the two is illuminating, for there must be all too few who realised or appreciated that, apart from his batting, W. G. Grace took no less than 271 wickets in these matches.

Finally, since everyone is entitled to one grouse per book, we can, at least, have an unusual one. The introduction covers but a bare 20 pages; it should have been 40 or 60. May we hope that in future editions it will be?

D. R. JARDINE.

## WIMBLEDON TO-DAY AND YESTERDAY

By NEVILLE DEED

ANOTHER Wimbledon is over, and tennis bags—adorned with labels of nearly every country under the sun—which for a hectic fortnight littered the dressing rooms of the All-England Club are now speeding homewards by land, sea and air or continuing that pilgrimage of the world's tournaments, which for so many of the players never seems to end. The many thousands of spectators too who spent hour after hour watching these players on court—sometimes thrilled to the marrow by the tension of close finishes, sometimes merely showing an academic interest in the

strokes produced—are now indulging their leisure moments on home or club courts, striving to drive à la Doris Hart or volley after the pattern of Budge Patty.

Every Wimbledon champion, man or woman, has had his or her imitators from the time of the Renshaw twins, and each year arises the inevitable question: How does the present compare with the past?

Has there been any radical development of the type of lawn tennis played to-day from that of 50 years ago, or would the present champion have beaten those of the 1890's? The first

## WIMBLEDON TO-DAY AND YESTERDAY

of these questions is much easier to answer than the second. That there is very little difference between the style of modern players and those of yesterday is an answer older eyes and memories can provide. The game of Patty and Sedgman to-day is in essentials the same as that played by Laurie Doherty in the early years of the century.

In each case the aim was to reach the net, not in one hectic rush, but in the easier stage of a preparatory volley so placed as to make the eventual kill an easy one. There were certainly fireworks at this 1950 Wimbledon that might have startled an Edwardian crowd, but Geoff Brown's cricket swipes were subdued by the immaculate driving of Eric Sturges and Drobny's lightning strokes by the classical style of Frank Sedgman. The only changes, apart from the two-handed stroke, to be noted in equipment are the increase in the speed of service, the development of the drop shot and the nether garments of the players themselves!

After all, lawn tennis did not spring *in toto* from the inventor's brain. It is a development of the much older game of rackets and of court tennis, whose records seem to merge with history itself. From the intensive daily competition between two sets of brothers, the Renshaws and the Dohertys, was developed the essential strokes and tactics of the play we saw in this year's men's final.

As to how Budge Patty, who beat Frank Sedgman 6-1, 8-10, 6-2, 6-3 in the final of the Men's Singles, or Miss Louise Brough, who for the third successive time won the ladies' event, would compare with the giants of the past are questions incapable of satisfactory answers.

So many factors affect the matter. While there have been players who like Austin, Helen Wills and Anthony

Wilding have generally had their best game as it were on tap, which, when once started, continued in uninterrupted flow, there have been others like Cochet, Perry, Schroeder and Sedgman whose best is only dragged out of them by the pressure of the opposition. Sedgman's defeat of Jarislav Drobny, the exiled Czech, is a fine example, also the long second set he won against Budge Patty in the final. Such players are always thrilling to watch, for you never know until the last ball is struck what is going to happen. Cochet was being murdered by Tilden at Wimbledon in 1927, two sets down and love five in the third, but the little man hung on, increased his own pressure as the American began to break, and finally won the match.

If we analyse the technique of these "under pressure" players we find as a rule that they take the ball early on the rise, or even volley it near the ground where most would drive a dropping ball. To do this accurately, very exact co-ordination of hand and eye is needed and great concentration.

To concentrate so hard continuously without relaxation is almost impossible, and therefore we get the alternating patches of very good and very bad play with the occasional ball hitting the bottom of the net or sailing out into the blue, which reduced the friends of Cochet, Perry, Kingscote and Senorita de Alvarez to a state of nervous exhaustion.

Budge Patty is nearly as quick on the ball as Sedgman, and more often than not moves to a position halfway between base and service lines to take second service. This makes the extreme accuracy he displayed all the more astonishing. His timing of drive and volley was so good that he seemed to catch the ball on his racket and place it on the line! Perhaps more than most he has thought deeply on the



## THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

problems of stroke production and training. Normally a heavy smoker, he cut out the habit altogether in his effort to achieve that fitness both of mind and body so necessary to the modern champion. Modern designedly because though opinions may differ as to whether Doherty or Lacoste would have beaten Patty there is no doubt who had the harder row to hoe.

Even after the days when the reigning champion had stood out from the main competition to defend his title in the challenge round there were not many competitors who had the slightest chance of extending him.

In this Wimbledon it was anybody's guess which of the eight players in the fifth round of the men's singles would reach the semi-final.

Sedgman's defeat of the American, A. Larsen, was a magnificent match, as good as any in the whole meeting. The American moving on to the ball with the agility and anticipation of a cat after a mouse and with no apparent weakness in his game, was indeed a hard man to beat.

The management of the All-England Club is usually the last word in efficiency, but there was a bad slip in its direction on the second Monday night when, after a day's rain, two matches, Sedgman v. Larsen and Patty v. Talbert, were put on court at nearly half past six. Now even given normal light, there was no chance of finishing a long five-set match, and the light was far from normal. Had any of the players protested against it after playing one game the referee must surely have upheld their protest.

As a result, both matches were cut in two, and W. Talbert had to continue next day against his fellow American with the score 6-3, 5-7, 5-2 against him. Talbert, who as the second seeded player, was expected to reach the final, was new to Wimbledon

and the fast pace of its courts, whereas Patty was quite an *habitué*, so it is easy to see in whose favour the break acted.

Talbert had a very unlucky tournament, for he and Gardner Mulloy, America's prospective Davis Cup pair, were beaten in the third round of the doubles by the young Australians Sedgman and Kenneth McGregor in five close sets. The credit of this match was chiefly Sedgman's for his Adonis of a partner, who stands 6 feet 3 inches without looking either lanky or clumsy, was at times pathetically unable to return service.

There had been five Americans, one Australian, one South African and one Czech refugee in the fifth round of the men's singles, but the Australian teams altogether swamped the doubles event, and in providing two pairs, Bromwich-Quist and Sidwell-Brown for the final round, robbed it of international interest. A fine example of brain over brawn, Bromwich and Quist's victory sent older spectators home very pleased with themselves, for in any past v. present argument this match provided an obvious brief for the past.

The ladies' single final between Miss Brough and Mrs. du Pont was merely a repetition of hundreds of encounters between these two charming people. Sometimes one has won, sometimes another. Mrs. du Pont is ranked first in the United States and Miss Brough second, but the latter's capture of the championship singles cup for three successive years and her sweep this year of all the women's events gives her definite pre-eminence on fast courts.

No other woman save America's third ranking player Mrs. Pat Todd, who nearly beat Mrs. du Pont in the semi-final round, provided any competition for the title.

Miss Hart could not reproduce the fine form that had won her the singles cup at Queen's Club the previous week.



## WIMBLEDON TO-DAY AND YESTERDAY

She evidently lacked the stamina for another fortnight's play and faded out of the picture. It was a pity, for in the question of style I doubt if the rhythmic beauty of her strokes has ever been excelled by any other woman.

How do the strokes of the two women finalists, so supreme in modern amateur tennis, compare with those of the immortals? They are both volleyers who have learned how to drive, indeed, the latter shot has been forced on them by the necessity of passing one another at the net. Now Suzanne Lenglen was the supreme all-court player. She had all the strokes and was very fast on her feet. She had everything, in fact, except temperament. Helen Wills Moody had temperament and great driving accuracy, but lacked the volley and was slow of foot. Helen Jacobs and Alice Marble fell far short of the latter's consistency off the ground, but then Miss Marble's volleying was devastating!

In actual play Helen Wills proved herself stronger than Helen Jacobs and would probably have won the majority of matches against Alice Marble.

Suzanne almost certainly was the best of them all, though in a tense championship final she might very well have lost to Helen Wills. One of the moderns, Miss Pauline Betz, frequent conqueror in the past of Miss Brough and Mrs. du Pont and now a professional, would be a strong candidate for historical honours. Though a good volleyer, she is pre-eminently a baseliner with a speed of foot to rival Suzanne's. I should be inclined to place her with Helen Jacobs on a step just short of the pedestal on which Lenglen, Wills and Marble stand.

So much for women's single, but there is a match I should very much like to see could a super Wellsian time machine produce it; a doubles between Lenglen and Miss Ryan and Louise Brough and Margaret du Pont!

Finally, to return to the men, I see no reason why Budge Patty, who survived a large field of very fine players, should be considered less in stature than other Wimbledon champions. Whether he be a great player only his future will decide.

NEVILLE DEED.

## GABRIELE D'ANNUNZIO

*This is the first of two extracts from the fifth and final volume of Sir Osbert Sitwell's autobiography "Left Hand! Right Hand!" which will be published shortly by Messrs. Macmillan under the title of "Noble Essences."*

By SIR OSBERT SITWELL, Bt.

GABRIELE D'ANNUNZIO! the sound still carries with it a political as well as an esthetic echo: yet who to-day remembers him as the Regent of Carnaro, and who, it may be, reads now the great poet who purified the Italian language, and wrote novels and plays which obtained a world-wide renown? Yet, in addition,

D'Annunzio had long been a figure of universal fame, of a kind that scarcely attaches itself to anyone in this age. Indeed, it is difficult to find any just comparison for him, or prototype, except Byron. Like Byron, he had become famous at a very early age—in his own case, in his teens—with his poems. The two men were alike in the

shock their books created, in their force of character and in their interests : though a great fire shone, too, in the oratory of D'Annunzio—a gift denied to Byron. But Byron's personality wielded as powerful an influence as D'Annunzio's, and each left his mark on the world for ever, even though his books were for a time not read. Both poets in the end turned men of action and eventually sought refuge, after lives of dissipation, in political adventure. Both men provided innumerable scandals for the boudoir and drawing-room: since, again like Byron, D'Annunzio, though he lacked the earlier writer's personal beauty and aristocratic background, was the hero of love affairs that were most eagerly discussed in the worlds of art and fashion. Even those who had never read a line by him, were interested. To be able to give details of his quarrel with Duse conferred on him or her who announced them a flattering quality of "being in the know." If the truth were obscure, then stories, of the most improbable kind, were invented for the consumption of the inmates of the salons of America and Europe. . . . Even to-day I can recall hearing one of them related : D'Annunzio, it was said, was spending the end of a love affair, and a long Italian autumn, in a decaying castle in the hills. The place was enormous, the scenery appropriate, but as the season dragged into winter, a bitter dullness invested the castle, no less than the love affair it sheltered, until again the surrounding world of neighbours and peasants was fluttered by the news that a lady in a white cloak rode into the courtyard at midnight and ensuing midnights on a white horse—or should I write white palfrey?—the explanation of this singularly tall story being that the lady in the flowing cloak was D'Annunzio, who had thus clothed himself in order to re-awaken interest and induce those who beheld the phan-

tom to believe that a new love was beginning. Such anecdotes were swallowed easily, for undoubtedly an element of sensationalism existed in him, as in various other artists. Inherent even in the name he invented for himself and used—Gabriele D'Annunzio—which attaches itself so easily to the titles of the Archangels of Italian Culture, is something of this quality, as well as of the same free indulgence in obvious flights of poetry, the same fondness for the old poetic symbols, which is to be found equally in, for example, his assumption of the pomegranate as his personal emblem, and in the imagery of his books.

It was at the end of November 1920, on the shores of the Neapolitan Bay, that the idea of Fiume first laid hold on us. My brother suddenly remarked to me, as we stood on a terrace overlooking the sea, mountains and islands :

"We never saw Lenin seize power in Petrograd : let us now go to Fiume to see D'Annunzio. It may be the beginning of something else."

Immediately I realised with what truth he spoke ; for here was a small state seized and ruled over by a poet, and who could tell but that it might develop into an ideal land where the arts would flourish once more on Italian soil (D'Annunzio was wont to claim that Fiume was "Italian by right of landscape," and so it was, belonging clearly, as we were to see, to the same order as Naples or Genoa), as they have so often blossomed before ? It might even offer an alternative or escape from the Scylla and Charybdis of modern life, Slumbolshevism amid Democratic Bungalow-Rash—morbid states of the soul that are of no help to the artist.

Whatever, then, may be thought of the results of the Fiume adventure, my brother was right : the moment, the man, the place were of importance.

We began to approach the rather

### "Gabriele D'Annunzio"

elusive frontier of an unacknowledged principality. To enter Fiume was by no means easy. The Allies, and the Italian Government in particular, did not wish to encourage their nationals to visit the city: while the Regency was also, for its part, strongly opposed to receiving foreigners in a time when there was a shortage of food and necessities. Journalists especially were disliked—and as such I was appearing—because some, who had been received with kindness, had on their return home published attacks of a personal nature on those who had entertained them. Thus it was that, after we had journeyed for some five hours, my own troubles began. . . . The soldier at the border could not read easily, but he could, and did, with some trouble to himself, at last decipher uneasily a name on my passport. . . . Alas, it was not my name, as it happened, but that of the Foreign Secretary who had signed the document. At first the Italian was obviously not sure where he had heard it before, but then, as his eye lighted on the motto under Lord Curzon's coat-of-arms, *Let Curzon holde what Curzon helde* and he repeated it in broken English, turning it on his tongue, he received suddenly the full impact of the astonishing plot he had by chance uncovered. Here, he concluded, was Lord Curzon, the chief instrument of English democracy, trying to sneak into the Regency, without informing any of the ministers or officials. He gave a bellow of rage and informed me that I was *not* allowed to proceed on my journey. . . . It was only after moments seemed to have turned to hours that, with the help of Orioli's natural eloquence, and the aid of a Tuscan Wolf with whom luckily a flask of wine had been shared on the cold journey, finally I was permitted my own identity and released.

Eventually we arrived at Fiume.

D'Annunzio had detailed, to take us



GABRIELE D'ANNUNZIO.

round, as guide, an officer who was gay, enthusiastic, pleasure-loving. London in particular—London, which was then truly a city of life and pleasure—, London, which he had never visited, was the object of his almost passionate longing. He—for, in his Italian way, he was, though perhaps not consciously to the full extent, a Futurist—dreamt of the tubes and motor-buses and the great stores, the cars in lines, the delicious traffic blocks scented by petrol fumes, the music-halls. And the buildings must be beautiful too, he averred. But none finer, I replied, than those to be admired in Italian cities. "Ma," he replied in a voice infused with astonishment, "il Palazzo di Cristallo." He had fought in Poland, and during that time had met many English officers, of whom, however, he retained a singular memory, for he remarked, "*Molto gentili: ma sempre mangiano jam, jam, jam.*"

At five o'clock the following evening we were, accordingly, conducted to D'Annunzio's study. Our sole interview with him lasted only three-quarters of an hour, but it would be impossible soon to forget it. . . . As we entered, I recall, a Portuguese journalist was just being shown out, reiterating fulsomely in Italian as he stepped backward out of the presence: "The Portuguese nation regards you as the Christ of the Latin World—the Christ of the Latin World—the . . ." When he had gone, in the ensuing silence, the repetition of the words could still be heard from the next room, and then gradually died away. . . . The study was fairly large, and contained little furniture. Its walls were almost entirely covered with banners. On the inner side, supported by brackets, stood stiffly two gilded saints from Florence, their calm, wide-open eyes gazing out over the deepening shades of the Fiumian sea. Near the fireplace, on one of the tables, rose the shape of a vast 15th-century bell, made by the famous bell-maker of Arbe, and presented to D'Annunzio by the people of that island. At the central desk sat the Commander himself, with his pomegranate in front of him, behind inkstand and pens.

Often, as I have before emphasised, an analogy in appearance will summon up more effectively for the reader the look of a man than can the most elaborate and precise description. What can one say? That D'Annunzio was small, lightly made, dressed in grey uniform, had a face of rather Arab cast—he came from the south-east of Italy—and streaky moustache and embryo beard. But if I write that—as was the case—the first thing that struck one was that he bore a distinct resemblance to Igor Stravinsky, the admirers of that great genius can picture D'Annunzio more easily. The poet wore many ribbons and on his left shoulder carried the

Italian Gold Medal for valour, the equivalent of our Victoria Cross. Though he was completely and grotesquely bald, though only his left eye remained—for he had lost the other in the war—, though he was nervous and exhausted, yet at the end of a few seconds the extraordinary charm he possessed, which had enabled him on many occasions to change mobs of enemies into furious partisans, had exercised itself on us. . . . He began to speak. The first words he addressed to us were, "Well, what new poets are there in England?" (not, you will notice, "What new generals are there?" or "Who plays for Woolwich Arsenal?"). Then he went on to talk of our country, and of his fervent admiration for Shelley, whose death himself had tried to imitate at the age of fifteen in the Bay of Castellammare. In his discourse there was not a little to northern ears of absurdity, but through it ran the hypnotic thread of his eloquence. He switched soon from poetry to sport, and talked of English greyhounds—which, after poetry, he considered evidently the greatest national speciality—"running wild over the moors of Devonshire." He proceeded to tell us of the strange conversations which he held with the people. A silent crowd would begin to collect, and then swell quickly outside the Palace. He would go out on to the balcony and demand what it was they wanted. A voice would answer, and thus would gradually build itself up a system of direct intercourse between the people and their ruler. This he claimed to be the first example of such interplay since Greek times. He told us, too, of Fiume and of his intense loneliness there, of how he, who always loved books and music, had remained in his city for fifteen months, surrounded solely by peasants and soldiers, while the Italian Govern-



ment, relying on his roving temperament, tried to "bore him out." He spoke of the enthusiasm of his legionaries, and declared how difficult it was to keep them at peace: weary of waiting for battle, they would fight one another in some sham contest, and it was by no means unusual for there to be serious casualties from bombs and bullet wounds. Soon after his proclamation, for instance, of the Fiumian Constitution, in which he had announced that music was to be the "Religious and Social Institution of the Regency of Carnaro," he had invited an eminent Italian conductor to bring his orchestra over from Trieste and give a series of concerts, and had provided for him a fight for the orchestra to witness. Four thousand troops, among whom were the two Garibaldian veterans whom we had seen—one aged seventy-eight and the other eighty-four—had taken part in the contest, and one hundred men had been seriously injured by bombs. The members of the orchestra, which had been playing during the quieter intervals, fired by a sudden access of enthusiasm, dropped their instruments, and charged and captured the trenches. Five of them were badly hurt in the struggle.

This new principality seemed full of paradox and of hope, as well as of a certain menace: but the Muse of History had decreed that it should fall within a few weeks of our visit. Giolitti showed his native cunning and unrivalled experience by the way in which he brought matters to a head.

The poet has long been dead, and is to-day neither insulted daily nor praised. Together with the majority of the great army of the dead, he is out of fashion. Yet truly, though I have here written an impression of an episode in his life, it is his writings, more than his actions, which are of interest, as must always be the case with an author. His novels, so tremendous in their power

of evoking emotion, and in their poetic eloquence and rhetoric—books such as *Il Fuoco*, *Le Vergini Delle Rocce*, *Il Piacere*, plays like *La Città Morta*—are there for us to reawaken and revive by our interest. In them is to be found often an overwhelming force of imagery, and sometimes a certain quality of lushness—though this does not apply to his poems—that might be cloying, were not its sweetness also contaminated and reduced by the morbidity prevalent at the end of the old century. . . . The public always clamours for a message in poetry or prose: seldom is it more angry than when it gets one.

But what words can picture its rage when a poet, having for years preached his message, proceeds, as did Tolstoy and D'Annunzio, for example, to translate it into action. Tolstoy, abandoning wealth and family, and finally running off to die in the snow at a wayside railway-station, in an attempt to hide from those he had abandoned to their worldly fate, was accused of insincerity; so was D'Annunzio. He had for years preached the importance of being a leader of men, the importance of staying for years immured in the dark strength of your travertine palace, impervious to the light and clamour of the democratic days outside, of waiting for your moment to emerge, armed in the full panoply of your strength, then to act swiftly and with decision. He followed his own advice. For a time he led and acted swiftly. To-day his politics belong to the past, so derided by the Futurists who supported his actions, whereas his written words, which they criticised, belong to the present and the future, and are still there for us to read, their meaning moving and flickering through the immortal phrases, in the same way that a salamander, in part obscured by the smoke of a great fire, might be seen to glow.

OSBERT SITWELL.

# HOW TO GROW GROUND-NUTS

By DR. H. MARTIN-LEAKE

THE East African Groundnut Scheme has passed through many vicissitudes ; it has also been subjected to much criticism. That criticism has followed two main lines, administrative and technical. There is little doubt that the speed with which the scheme was prepared and put into operation failed to take full account of the administrative complexities, great at any time but more so in the immediate post-war period, with the world shortage of equipment of all sorts. It must now be conceded, too, that over-optimism led to grave errors of judgment on the technical side ; the risks of erosion through the clearance of vast areas of virgin bush and the adequacy of the rotational scheme, and even of the latest modifications, to maintain a permanent high level of soil fertility were grossly under-estimated. Sufficient has been written and said in criticism of these aspects, but of an even more fundamental criticism little or nothing has been heard. It is this aspect, the social implications of the scheme, which is considered below.

It is implicit in British policy for those Colonial territories with backward populations, that the interests of the indigenous peoples shall be paramount and that all development shall be directed to making a people capable of standing by themselves. In the limited terms of peasant agriculture this has been defined as the freedom of the peasant to grow what *he* thinks will pay him best. Such a policy must fulfil two conditions ; it must create the national wealth to provide a higher standard of

living and it must provide a field in which the more intelligent may find a training fitting them to take control of all the activities of a people standing on their own feet. It was because the older systems—the family *estates* of our older Colonies, such as the West Indies which copied the English system and led to the slave trade, and the *plantation* system which followed the passing of the Companies' Act and is to be seen in the rubber, tea, sisal and oil palm plantations—with their paid labour force, failed to satisfy the second condition that there was introduced, at the end of last century, that system with which the name of Lord Lugard was associated and which, for brevity, may be termed the dual mandate system.

It soon became evident, however, that this new system, if it avoided the major evil of the plantation system of offering no line of advancement to the more intelligent in the economic development of their country, failed to satisfy the first requirement—the delivery of the goods. This failure led to the enlargement of the official technical organisations, the Agricultural and Co-operative Departments, the function of which was to raise under a peasant system both the standard of production and the quality of the product. In this the system has been only partially successful, witness West African cacao and palm oil, to mention only two examples, but it has become perfectly evident that it, no less than the plantation system, has failed to satisfy the second requirement. It is only necessary to consider the Uganda Cotton



## HOW TO GROW GROUNDNUTS

Ordinances and the host of Regulations issued thereunder to see how far from realisation is even that initial objective of freedom for the cultivator to grow what he thinks will pay him best. The system has led, and inevitably led, to a highly bureaucratic hierarchy, the dangers of which are obvious, rooted as they are in human nature.

The failure both of the plantation and the "dual mandate" system to satisfy the social aspirations was apparent even before the war in the disturbances in more than one Colony and the war has only intensified the sense of frustration, as witness the strikes in the sugar industry of the West Indies and the unrest in West Africa. It is in this atmosphere that the groundnut scheme has been launched. In essence it is a plantation scheme on a vast scale, but with this difference, the employer, however the position is masked by delegation of authority to a Corporation, is the Government which provides the finance. It is thus a plantation scheme without the safeguard of an impartial referee. Government, in the words of Lord Hewart, is "doubling the part of suitor and judge." Further, the labour force, with no other stake than its pay and in a position to hold the whole scheme to ransom by striking, provides a hot-bed for all those subversive forces now rampant in the world.

A scheme which is to prove immune to these subversive forces must, in its social aspect, satisfy three conditions ; it must provide a sense of security which, for a peasant, is found in ownership or long lease of a plot of ground, an incentive given by a share in the return and a ladder by which the more intelligent may rise in the organisation. Too long the plantation and the peasant systems have been considered the only alternatives ; yet there is a third, most aptly termed the Agricultural Co-partnership system, already a proved

system. In Fiji, the sugar industry, originally organised on a plantation basis, was forced to reconsider its position by the abrupt termination of the indenture system by which it secured Indian labour. The C.S.R. took the bold and successful step of dividing its estates into peasant holdings which it leased on condition that a certain area was put down to cane. The vast Gezira scheme in the Sudan was similarly carried to success on the basis of peasant holdings. Both schemes are worthy of detailed study as much for their omissions as for their commissions ; for they were purely *ad hoc* schemes, designed to meet abnormal conditions and not the outcome of preconceived principles. One difference is particularly enlightening. In the Sudan the co-operative principle for payment to the peasant was adopted from the beginning ; in Fiji its adoption was delayed till just before the war with its basis of calculation too complicated for ready understanding. If subversive forces there became active for a period, it was for these reasons, and the experience offers a useful lesson.

It is in the application of the lessons provided by these two examples that will be found the salvation of the groundnut scheme. It is essential that each area be organised as an independent Co-partnership Association, giving that friendly rivalry, both technical and administrative, which will best ensure success. Clearly, for the present, finance must come from without. Is there any reason to suppose that it will not be forthcoming as it was for that bold venture in the Sudan ? That will have a dual advantage : Government returns to its primary function of independent arbiter, approving the conditions of the lease and intervening when, and only when, as in Fiji, trouble arises.

H. MARTIN-LEAKE.

## Farm and Garden

# STARVATION IN THE MIDST OF PLENTY

By LADY EVE BALFOUR

ONE of the most interesting of this year's overseas visitors to the Soil Association's Research Farm at Haughley in Suffolk, was Dr. Ehrenfried Pfeiffer, who paid us a visit during July and who also addressed a well-attended public meeting in London on July 13, at which I was present.

Dr. Pfeiffer is not only Director of the Biochemical Research Laboratory, Spring Valley, New York, and author of several books on soil conservation, including *The Earth's Face* and *Soil Fertility, Renewal and Preservation* (published by Faber and Faber), but is also a successful practical farmer.

The title of his talk in London was "Can Farming Save Itself and the World?" In discussing this major problem of human survival, he spoke at some length about the increasing nutritional deficiencies apparent in plants, animals, and human beings. He produced some startling figures to show that large sections of the community of the United States, though consuming ample quantities of food, were in fact as undernourished as the people of Holland during that winter of the German occupation, when they subsisted largely on tulip roots. "Starvation in the midst of plenty" had become a present reality. He described how somebody once brought a carrot to his laboratory and, putting it on the table, said "Look at that!" He replied, "Why should I? I've seen a carrot before." His visitor replied, "Analyse it!" This he did, and he

found it contained no carotene and thus no vitamin A: yet carrots in general, without specifying their origin, are still widely recommended as a source of this essential vitamin. The fact was that both vitamin and mineral content depended upon the soil conditions in which the plant was grown.

Before going on to discuss the effects and causes of certain of the more common soil deficiencies, he referred to two very serious deficiencies in a wider field. First, the deficiency of manpower on the land. The proportion of the population in civilised countries which was employed on the land was steadily declining, and this left an ever smaller number of farmers to provide the food for all the rest of mankind. This extreme unbalance in population distribution, Dr. Pfeiffer feels, must be altered if the peoples of the world are to be fed, but he dislikes the term "back to the land"; it should be "forward to the land." He approves of mechanisation when properly organised, but all too often at present it does not make work on the land easier for the few who remain. The average 150-acre farm in his part of the U.S.A. is highly mechanised, but carries only two men, who have to work a twelve-hour day seven days a week. The second major deficiency he declared to be in the human mind itself, which failed to grasp the true concept of agriculture as a complex biological process which could only be maintained through awareness of the inter-

## FARM AND GARDEN

dependence of species and the need for correct balance in the many factors affecting soil fertility.

Of the trace element deficiencies, he said one of the most prevalent to-day was magnesium, and that throughout his tour of England and Scotland during his visit this summer he had observed widespread evidence of this deficiency. In plants, one of the effects of a magnesium shortage was to cause a protein deficiency, and in human beings the symptoms were fatigue, listlessness, nervousness and a general sense of an inability to cope with the stresses of modern life. He gave figures to show how of all hospital cases in the U.S.A. an increasing percentage were mental diseases of one kind or another. The remedy, he said, did not lie in direct application of magnesium to the soil, but a restoration of correct balance so as to re-establish the biological processes. It was possible to apply this, that or the other substance to soil and still there would be a failure of utilisation by the living organism, if these processes were faulty. Mineral balance and biological balance went hand in hand. You could not have the one without the other. One very frequent cause of magnesium deficiency he claimed to be over-liming.

Among the interesting facts stated by Dr. Pfeiffer was that evidence of a cumulative residual bad effect on health following the use of D.D.T. has resulted, in America, in a complete ban on the use of that chemical for spraying crops. He also gave particulars of a few of the discoveries he has made as a

result of his research work. These, together with particulars of the new analytical procedures which he has developed, are shortly to be published and made available to the world. One of the most important seems to me to be a discovery that a regular seasonal variation occurs in mineral availability. Dr. Pfeiffer has found that an ordinary chemical soil analysis, for available nutrients, if taken frequently in the identical spot, will be low at the end of March and beginning of April, high in May, low again in August and high in October. These figures, of course, apply to the American soils with which he has been working, but if seasonal variations exist anywhere, they probably exist everywhere, even if the periods differ. Another discovery was the effect of different *crops* on mineral availability. Soil taken below beans, for example, will have a higher available mineral analysis than soil taken where a root crop is growing. The importance of these discoveries, if they apply everywhere, is of course obvious. They mean that a soil analysis without taking into consideration the time of year, or the growing crop, is meaningless as a guide to soil treatment or for comparative purposes.

Dr. Pfeiffer closed his talk with a plea for a new concept in our approach to farming problems, including a long-term view. We should farm always, he said, for the unborn. Only thus can farming save itself and the world.

EVE B. BALFOUR,  
*Organising Secretary,*  
*The Soil Association Ltd.*

# AFTER KOREA

By J. R. APPLEBEY

THE choice has always been the same. "We have to choose," wrote John Hawkins in 1588, "either a dishonourable and uncertain peace, or to put on virtuous and valourous minds, to make a way through such a settled war as will bring forth and command a quiet peace." Under President Truman, acting more and more in harmony with the old Athenian ideal new-clothed in the United Nations, the free world has chosen. It is to be virtuous and valourous minds, even if the price is a settled war. Now, however, the consequences of the choice have to be faced. What will be the economic effects of the Korean commitment?

This is the question that has been exercising the City ever since the fighting broke out; and during the past few weeks it has gradually been feeling its way to an answer. A starting-point is the Chancellor's statement on the second quarter's gold and dollar earnings and his own assessment of the outlook—ex Korea. On the whole, the record of the first six months has proved even better than had been generally expected. The sterling area has earned a surplus of dollars of \$220 million—\$180 million of this in the second quarter alone; and with the receipts under the Marshall Plan and drawings on the Canadian credit, the sterling area's gold and dollar reserve has risen from \$1,688 million at the end of 1949 to \$1,984 million at March 31, 1950, and finally to \$2,422 million at the end of June. This is a marked and heartening contrast to the experience of last year, when at this time the reserve was approaching its lowest point of \$1,340 million. On the other hand, as the

Chancellor himself justly pointed out, the dollar earnings of the first six months of the year cannot, for a number of reasons, be taken as a guide for the experience of the whole year. In the first six months of the year the sterling area was benefiting from the immediate results of devaluation—the double dam of delayed purchases and delayed payments caused something of a flood when it was broken; but the normal flow is now reasserting itself. Secondly, dollar earnings are seasonally high in the first half of the year, and dollar expenditure seasonally low. On top of this purchases by sterling area countries in the dollar area have been below the planned rate in the first half of the year and are likely to increase in the second half—even apart from the increase in demand for dollars that is making itself known, for example, in Australia. Thirdly, some fall in American prices is to be expected in the normal course of events; in fact, towards the end of the second quarter of the year this movement was already beginning to appear. (It is the rise in American prices which has been one of the biggest factors in bringing so many dollars to the sterling area in the June quarter.) Finally, there are still the remoter effects of devaluation and the more immediate effects of the Government's internal financial policy to work themselves out in terms of export prices. These dangers remain as great as ever.

This assessment is, however, only the starting-point. Before Korea it was the basis for an increase in confidence which was showing itself in rise in gilt-edge prices. How must it be modified in the light of events in Korea? So far the City has practically ignored the

## AFTER KOREA

possibility that the incident might lead to a full-scale war—or at least the possibility is still judged to be sufficiently remote to be set aside. On the other hand, the initial successes of the North Koreans brought a steady slide in prices—though nothing like the avalanche in New York—and it is this short-term re-assessment which at first ruled the market ; but there is clearly more involved than the ebb and flow of fortunes on the battlefield itself, and the larger picture is now beginning to emerge from the first uncertainties.

What the City sees is the shadow of fresh inflation. At the moment it is still impossible to judge how far the military commitment in Korea is likely to lead. But—also for the moment—this is of comparatively little importance. What is important is that the outbreak of fighting in Korea by itself is having and is likely to have two effects on the world economy. In the first place, of course, there are the immediate repercussions in America. Instead of stockpiling, the United States is using up war materials ; a proportion of its armed forces has been put on a war footing. This means increased demand for raw materials, many of them coming from the sterling area, and increased Government expenditure. Already the prospect of this demand has strengthened the prices of rubber and tin ; although with over three million unemployed there is still some slack to take up, the pressure of inflation in America, which has already, according to some observers, been piling up, is now being increased. Apart from the rises which have immediately taken place, a check to the fall in commodity prices which might otherwise have taken place is now almost certain. More important than this, however, is the change in sentiment. Korea has revealed what since Berlin had been forgotten, that the possibility of con-

flict between the East and West is always present. Taken together with Berlin, it has shown moreover what an advantage the East has over the West in position. Strategically Russia is working on interior lines. Berlin and China, Korea and Poland, Germany, Yugoslavia or Persia—Russia can apply the pressure where she chooses. If a major war should break out, the American store of atom bombs, as Mr. Churchill has suggested, would probably be decisive. But short of that, the commitment for policing—from Formosa, through Malaya, to Western Germany—is both heavy and anxious. And in Britain especially this is likely to be felt. We are already incurring some expenditure on account of our forces in action on behalf of the United Nations ; Malaya is to receive extra assistance. But, in the long run, the cost of guarding against another outbreak, even if the outbreak in Korea is successfully extinguished, is likely to be much heavier ; and in Britain there is no reserve of taxable capacity (in spite of Sir Stafford) and no reserve of manpower—nor, it must be added, is there any reserve of strategic raw materials.

That the fighting in Korea will soon come to an end without spreading is the minimum assumption ; on this assumption a check to the possible fall in world commodity prices, together with an increase in inflationary pressure, at least in this country, is almost a certainty. And on this assumption one is tempted to presume, at least at first sight, that the Korean incident might actually work to the advantage of the sterling area. Military commitments of the sterling area might lead to some increase in dollar imports—of base metals and of oil ; but on past experience, short of a total war, this increased cost is likely to be far outweighed by the advantage that a maintenance of prices will bring in terms of purchases



of sterling area commodities. Added to this there is the possibility, if not the probability, that the maintenance of American forces outside the dollar area will bring more dollars to the non-dollar world. Short of war, in other words, a fresh rise in prices might well drift us further away from the rocks towards which we have been steering.

This obvious possibility has so far left the City and the markets unmoved. This may be partly because the implications of the new situation have not yet been absorbed ; it is partly, no doubt, because the possibility of a full-scale war still exists. Until this possible improbable is turned into an improbable possible it must make for caution. Hovering in the background, however, is still something else, more important than either of these. The attack on Korea has given rise to a situation that cannot be assessed purely in economic terms. Overhanging the judgment of economic issues is a sense of national and international political decisions not yet taken, which might and should profoundly affect the course of events.

So far this feeling is generally unformulated ; but it might be crystallised into a number of specific questions. First of all, there are a group of questions which deal specially with British internal policy. The principal of these was implied by Mr. Churchill in the debate in the House of Commons. How effective are this country's defence arrangements and how far is the country getting value for the £780 million now being spent on defence ? Given that our defence commitment is likely to be increased, can the money be better spent ? The circumstances are different and the range of problems is to a certain extent different, but it might be an encouragement to recall that Hawkins built and maintained the fleet that defeated the Armada at half the cost to the Government of the earlier

fleet. Alternatively, if there is no possibility of any major saving on defence out of which the increase might be found, where is the money to come from ? At what point is the Government likely to draw back on expenditure or increase the pressure of taxation in order to relieve the strain ? Can taxation be increased ? This question might be put another way. Even without the complication of Korea, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said in his statement on the gold and dollar reserve that there is still a need for restraint in personal incomes ; the implication is that the danger of inflation is still with us even now. If the pressure increases no Government could stand by and watch it growing. What is the Government likely to do ?

The second group of questions concerns international decisions, and is perhaps even more important. According to one's moral or political standpoint, the Korean incident can be looked on either as the first experiment in international action to prevent war under the United Nations, or as an attempt by America alone to uphold the principles of democracy—an attempt which the rest of the free world approves and is ready to join ; or finally—though few outside the Iron Curtain hold anything approaching this view—as an old-fashioned frontier incident in which America has become involved as the guardian of the frontier and into which she is drawing all those who revolve in the same sphere. On any of these views, even the last, which is both the most cynical and least in accordance with the apparent facts, the effort that is being made is a common one.

What is being done or should be done to concert the efforts of all the countries and to make them harmonious ? In one form the problem is a physical one. Should the sterling

## AFTER KOREA

area (it has been asked, for example), in spite of the economic advantage of doing so, sell freely the commodities which may at some time become strategically necessary for its own purposes? Put in another way, distasteful though necessary: Can the sterling area countries incur the suspicion that they are profiting materially by the United States' greater effort in a common cause? Or the problem can be looked at from the other end: How should the effort in a common cause be financed? Individually by Governments, with loans and aid if necessary? Or in common from the very beginning? However remote it may seem at the moment and however difficult, this is a question which the United

Nations, if it is to establish its moral control of the fighting, ought to be tackling straight away.

Wherever the fighting in Korea leads, if the attempt to check aggression is to have an international character, it must not be bedevilled by the kind of financial difficulties which on previous occasions have arisen solely because what was eventually a common effort began on the resources of one or two Governments alone. From the point of view of any one country, not excluding the United Kingdom, it is the answer to this group of questions which will ultimately determine the economic effect of the new situation.

J. R. APPLEBEY.

# THE DISADVANTAGES OF DRAMA

By DENIS CANNAN

**A**MONG all the other shortages there is a shortage of good dramatists. The bad dramatists blame the theatrical managers. I have been a bad dramatist for the last ten years, and during this decade I have hawked nine bad plays around nearly every manager of consequence in the country. The big managers usually behaved well, and returned my plays with graceful refusals within an average time of five or six weeks. The only instances of bad behaviour I can remember were from idealistic societies designed to save the Drama and help young playwrights. They have a habit of losing manuscripts, and then moving to a different part of Bayswater.

When the bad playwright goes to the West End theatre and sees some of the trash that can gain over a hundred

performances, he jumps to the conclusion that the managers are fools, and that because their theatres are stocked with rubbish their offices must be filled with the unregarded works of genius. If this were so, it would be reasonable to expect that every now and then someone would discover a neglected theatrical masterpiece. Judging from the history of the drama, this seems to be an event of such extreme infrequency that one may almost say that it never happens. There is no such thing as a posthumous fame in the theatre without some measure of success in life. Works of genius may have been booed off the stage, but even a single unsuccessful performance implies some degree of recognition from the managers and actors who risked the production. Immature or unconventional plays may

sometimes have waited three or four years for performance, but we must surely allow a manager to choose his own time for gambling a large part of his fortune on a chancy investment. Some people say that managers should not be allowed to have fortunes, and that all theatres should be administered from public funds. Much as I have benefited both as an actor and an author from Government subsidies, I have not noticed that the State-aided theatres can find any more good new plays than the private ones ; indeed, the plays in their repertoires are chiefly remarkable for being considerably older than anyone else's. The State, through no fault of its own, spends most of its money on subsidising dramatists who are dead.

My personal experience leads me to suppose that the shortage of new plays cannot be blamed on either the managers or their system. The sins of both are multitudinous, but the suppression of good new plays is not one of them. If any dramatist shows the faintest sign of promise, he will find that the market will rush to meet him. Why, when we have so many competent novelists, passable poets, and elevating writers on everything under the sun, have we so few people who can even write good commercial stage trickery, and only a meagre half-dozen who can be relied upon to give us something better ? Why is the dramatist's talent apparently so rare ? Why, to look backwards, have we no *actable* plays by Keats, Shelley, Byron, Wordsworth, Brown-ing, Jane Austen, the Brontes, Trollope, Dickens, Thackeray, D. H. Lawrence or H. G. Wells ? Commentators will tell us that the literary ineptitude of the nineteenth century drama was caused by the half-witted managers—and, worse, the actor-managers—who failed to draw such sparkling talents to the theatre. But is a talent that succeeds

in one medium inevitably appropriate to another ? The creative ability that flourishes in the quiet isolation of the study is likely to be trampled to death in the rough-and-tumble of the workshop of the stage. The playwright has not only to possess a certain sort of talent ; he needs to be a special sort of person.

It is perfectly possible to be an excellent poet or essayist or even a novelist without being interested in anyone but yourself. Novels can be autobiographical, poems pure introspection. The playwright finds little material within his own soul, and has to be passionately interested in everyone. He need not necessarily be fond of people, but he must be curious enough about them to wonder how they work. The playwright is above all else a practical man, an organiser combined with a craftsman. He must be prepared to subordinate the cosmic range of his conceptions to the every-day dodges of theatrical business. He is the very reverse of the high-minded æsthetic intellectual, and if he comes to rehearsal filled with noble thoughts and interpretive theories he will find his actors far more concerned with the positions of tables and chairs. He will also find an atmosphere of blasphemy, bad language and a kind of irreverent fellowship ; of all artists the actor is the most eager to reduce theory to practice, and pretension to the matter-of-fact. Unless the playwright can cheerfully share this attitude, he will never be able to perform the principal part of his business : that of providing his actors and actresses with something to say and do. The composer's first task is to learn the nature of his instruments.

It is a characteristic of many great talents to refuse to compromise. But every successful theatrical performance is a compromise : a compromise between what is tragic, and what is

## THE DISADVANTAGES OF DRAMA

moving ; between what is witty, and what is laughable ; between what is beautiful, and what is effective. The playwright must learn to compromise twice over : first with his actors, who will demand that his lines shall fit their footsteps and their breathing and their mouthfuls of stage food, and secondly with the audience, which is a polite name for an assembly of varied intellects seeking to pass the time. The audience demands that everything shall be made plain. It is generally necessary to say a thing three times in different ways before an audience will understand it. The sort of writer who thinks it clever to be obscure is straightway driven to some higher medium. The audience is having an evening out, and therefore demands at least one opportunity for drinking. The playwright with fine ideas about dramatic form must somehow allow a comfortable time for the dress circle's gin and the gallery's pint. The audience cannot take a rest from the author, as a reader can lay down a book ; it therefore has to be constantly kicked into attention with good jokes, frequent changes of the characters in view, a continuously mounting tension, and plenty of little cadenzas where the actors may show off the favourite tricks that have made their reputations and brought the audience to the play. This truckling to the mob may seem shameless abasement to the man of taste—until he recollects that no one knew better how to hold the attention of the pit than playwrights like Molière and Shakespeare. Profiting from the example of such masters, the playwright who thinks he has something important to say will go to work with all the tricks of the trade of the yellow press journalist, the music hall comedian and the successful popular preacher.

Confronted with the prospect of all this deceit and compromise and car-

penry, is it surprising that the delicate talents of so many literary men shrink from entering our stage doors ? It is impossible to discuss the theatre nowadays without mentioning Mr. Christopher Fry. Here, the uninitiated might think, is an example of the man of letters, the scholar, the poet, at last using what was once our greatest medium of literary expression. But Mr. Fry was a small-part actor, a producer and the manager of a repertory theatre long before he was known as a poetic dramatist. When he succeeds, he is successful as a man of the theatre—not as a man of letters ; and it is precisely in the difference between these two terms that the answer to the shortage of playwrights lies.

Every art has its disadvantages and its disciplines, and it is by voluntarily expressing himself within those limitations that the artist shows his skill. Stone has the disadvantage of being hard to cut, but it has the merit of enduring. Sculptors accept the disadvantage, and continue to express themselves by carving stone rather than by slicing soap. The disciplines, the disadvantages of drama, are found in the continual compromise and trickery which both actors and audience demand. Plays which reject these disciplines may entertain coteries for the moment, and even achieve long runs from the intellectual snobbery of the suburbs, but they seldom endure for long except in print. The dramatist's discipline is created by the limitations of the vulgar mind, just as the sculptor's discipline is created by the hardness of the stone. The theatre is, literally, a vulgar place. Drama is a popular art. The Man of Letters affects to despise popularity, and uses vulgar as a term of abuse. That is why there is a shortage of dramatists.

DENIS CANNAN.

# CHURCHILL ON THE GRAND ALLIANCE\*

By A. L. ROWSE

**P**OLITICS and literature have been the two most characteristic expressions of the English in the arts of life. There their richest and most fruitful contributions to the world have been made. So it is not surprising—though it is a thing to be proud of—that only Britain produced a leader who was equally capable of writing the history of the great events in which he took such a leading part as a man of action. Churchill combines these two sides of the national genius—which are not so disparate as people are apt to think—in a fuller degree than anyone else in our history. He emerges therefore as perhaps the most representative of all Englishmen—more so than Cromwell or William Pitt; and not the less so for the American in him—for we are indeed one people. He certainly is the greatest ornament to the contemporary English scene—a national monument bulking as largely and affectionately to our minds as St. Paul's, emerging safe and sound and hardly at all battered from the heroic tumult of this latest phase in our history.

This new volume, in which he records the course of the war in 1941, is not a whit inferior to its predecessors. Indeed, I think it superior to the first volume: it has less rhetoric and less general reflections. The story itself gives it a more stream-lined simplicity, like a great boiler generating power; here Mr. Churchill has to adhere to the events as they take place: no room for anything extraneous. One does not know whether to admire more the splendid energy of the writer, well into his seventies, or the vitality and nerve of the statesman in action. No sense of tiredness or staleness whatsoever in this volume: it is alive and bounding with vigour on every page—how *does* he do it? The whole character of the man is portrayed in the book; in a sense very

objectively, for he is never concerned with himself. But there is the mixture never more clear: the colloquial with the eloquent, the homely with the dramatic, the humaneness with the force, the poetry of action, the boyish naturalness that charms. To Eden, while on an anxious visit across the Atlantic, his mind full of worries about the war in the Mediterranean, in Russia, with things going all wrong—then at the end of a State paper, "This voyage seems very long." Or to Roosevelt on the German preparations to invade England, "We are getting ready to give them a reception worthy of the occasion." Besides the humour, there is the candour and honesty—in a world of crooks; the magnanimity and generosity; above all, the courage.

Perhaps I may be permitted one general reflection. Churchill's own nerve must be allowed to have been a tremendous factor in the nation's survival. Future historians of the war as a whole—Churchill claims only to be making a contribution to the story—must not underestimate that factor. And how it stands out by contrast with the nervelessness of the years 1931 to 1939! It is Swift who has summed the matter up: "A great minister hath no virtue for which the public may not be the better, nor any defect by which the public is not certainly a sufferer."

Of the events and subjects covered in this volume, Churchill tells us, "I cannot recall any period when the stresses and the onset of so many problems all at once . . . bore more directly on me and my colleagues than the first half of 1941. The scale of events grew larger every year; but the decisions required were not more

\* Winston S. Churchill. *The Second World War*, Volume III: *The Grand Alliance*. Cassell 25s.



## CHURCHILL ON THE GRAND ALLIANCE

difficult. Greater military disasters fell upon us in 1942, but by then we were no longer alone and our fortunes were mingled with those of the Grand Alliance. No part of our problem in 1941 could be solved without relation to all the rest." Hence, when one is viewing more concentrated, more exciting events, one has to bear in mind the background against which they take place, the condition indeed of all the rest: the mounting strength of Britain and the unceasing struggle in the Atlantic for our very survival. Mr. Churchill contrives to give this largely statistical warfare its proper excitement—few others would have the art to do it. But there is one episode that has an incomparable dramatic interest and a unity of its own: the story of the *Bismarck*. I confess that I read that chapter before all the rest. There is always something more exciting about naval operations than any others. I do not forget that the *Hood* was manned from Devonport. Never shall I forget that dreadful day when the news of her sinking came; the loss of a great ship means more to English people than anything. Churchill's comment at such a moment reveals the nerves of steel necessary in war, "The *Hood* has blown up, but we have got the *Bismarck* for certain." . . . My American guest thought I was gay, but it costs nothing to grin."

The leading themes in this book are the group of campaigns in the Middle East and the Mediterranean: the conquest of Mussolini's empire in Africa, the Desert War and Rommel's victory, the Greek campaign and the Battle of Crete; Hitler's war on Russia, our alliance and growing contacts; Japan's war on U.S. and the achievement of the Grand Alliance.

Of all these interrelated themes the general reader will learn most that is new about the Mediterranean campaigns—the Desert War, Greece and Crete. It is precisely here that the average person has had least to go on and felt most dissatisfied about the disasters that happened to us. Many have felt that Wavell, for example, had very hard luck, if not positive injustice, done him, and found it difficult to understand quite why things went so savagely

wrong for us just here and then. It is rather consoling to find that Churchill himself found it difficult to understand at the time. Now we have the facts placed before us; now we can see for ourselves precisely what went wrong and can arrive at a judgment why. The fundamental reason was the same old trouble as gave Hitler his successes all along: the inability of threatened Powers to come together in time to save themselves being cut down one by one. So Yugoslavia refused to take a wonderful opportunity to come in on the rear of the Italian army held by Greece. It was not for want of being adjured by Churchill: "If they will fall on the Italian rear in Albania there is no measuring what might happen in a few weeks." It might easily have had the effect of driving Italy out of the war thus early. Again and again Churchill besought the Yugoslavs to make a common Balkan front with Greece. For want of it, there followed the separate disasters to themselves, to Greece, and to us in Crete.

Sometimes Mr. Churchill is too magnanimous, and if I may suggest one word of criticism here—he lets off too lightly the miserable pro-German set around Prince Paul: no doubt about the fighting qualities of the Yugoslav people. The whole success of the war for us in that area foundered on that in 1941. And yet it had, as is the way in war, unforeseen consequences of the greatest benefit. We see now that the superb resistance of our men in Crete against overwhelming forces—so heartrending at the time—destroyed the one crack airborne division of the Germans; while the delay it enforced upon their invasion of Russia gave the Russians just the margin by which they survived. It is sad to notice the complete incomprehension of the Americans, even of the President, as to the importance of this area. They thought that we were interested in it just as a bulwark of the British Empire. No idea how important it would be to the post-war settlement of Europe to end up with a firm position on the Danube. It would make all the difference now, as the Americans have had to recognise. The price the good have to

pay for ignorance in international affairs is too much to contemplate with any satisfaction. But these mistakes were none of Churchill's making, and the record clinches not only his honesty but his political prescience.

The most surprising thing that emerges from the book is what was, after all, the greatest surprise of the war: Hitler's invasion of Russia really caught the Kremlin unprepared. Is it not still somehow surprising—in spite of all that we know of them—that Stalin and Molotov should have preferred to trust a Hitler's word rather than a Churchill's? How to explain it? Is it that there is a certain stupidity, after all, in their crude Machiavellianism? That they cannot understand the honesty and candour of an English mind—they think there must be some trick in it? It must be part of the psychological explanation; it is also characteristic of the politically immature not to realise that honesty really is the best policy—one does not have to be a fool. If Stalin had listened to Churchill he could have constituted a Balkan front early in 1941 and forestalled Hitler's invasion; even at the last moment he need not have been caught with hundreds of aircraft grounded and have suffered all the initial disasters that so nearly overwhelmed them. But, in fact, Stalin preferred the illusions of his Pact with Hitler. The German Naval Attaché in Moscow wrote, "Stalin is the pivot of German-Soviet collaboration"—greatest of *collaborateurs*, one might say. When the declaration of war was read by the German Ambassador, Molotov said, "It is war. Your aircraft have just bombarded some ten open villages. *Do you believe that we deserved that?*"

A bargain with Hitler, within limits, would seem to have been Stalin's policy. So lately indifferent to our survival, the moment Stalin was forced to look to us for help he did not hesitate to tell us our own business. Though they had bungled their own defence and been caught napping, he was ready to tell the Prime Minister that the establishment of an immediate second front in France (in the

circumstances of 1941!) would be "popular with the British Army as well as with the whole population of Southern England." Lenin and Trotsky had never hesitated to tell us our business either. Can it surprise them how little of an effect they have in this country? It only shows what a secular tradition of Orthodoxy can do in the way of making the naturally intelligent really stupid.

Providentially, our co-operation with America is a totally different story—it shows that blood is thicker than water. All through this period of the war one feels—and how one resents it!—that luck was against us and pretty consistently with the bad. But the greatest stroke of luck of all was that Roosevelt should have been President of the U.S. No one with less than his political genius and dexterity could have freed his hands as far as he did from the idiotic neutrality legislation. It is astonishing the lengths he managed to go in aiding us, before ever America was in the war: he had long understood all that was at stake, for America no less than for us. It must have brought an immense reinforcement of fortitude—just when we were most alone and most needed it—for the Prime Minister to receive the President's personal message through Harry Hopkins: "The President is determined that we shall win the war together. He has sent me here to tell you that at all costs and by all means he will carry you through, no matter what happens to him—there is nothing that he will not do so far as he has human power." It still took a Pearl Harbour to convince the pacific American people. Shortly after, at that nadir of our common cause, the Prime Minister addressed Congress. How well we remember still that famous speech, those ringing accents, the thunder that greeted his "What sort of people do they think we are?" At that moment he was able to give them, it seemed, an injection of his own faith and resolution; after all that we had received from them, to give them something in return.

It is that theme, the co-operation of the two great branches of English-speaking people, that inspires the finest piece of

## CHURCHILL ON THE GRAND ALLIANCE

writing in the book: the description of Sunday morning service on board the *Prince of Wales*, with the President and his staff, in Placentia Bay, Newfoundland. "None who took part in it will forget the spectacle presented that sunlit morning on the crowded quarter-deck . . . the close-packed ranks of British and American sailors, completely intermingled, sharing the same books and joining fervently together in the prayers and hymns familiar to both. I chose the hymns myself—'For Those in Peril on the Sea' and 'Onward, Christian Soldiers.' We ended with 'O God, Our Help in Ages Past,' which Macaulay reminds us the Ironsides had chanted as they bore John Hampden's body to the grave. Every word seemed to stir the heart. It was a great hour to live. Nearly half those who sang were soon to die."

It is a tribute not only to his gallantry

but to his sense of history that when he was privileged to wheel the great President in his chair, he felt like Walter Raleigh laying his cloak before Queen Elizabeth. He wished us to make a last stand in Greece at Thermopylæ: "The intervening ages fell away. Why not one more undying feat of arms?" It is something to have an historian as our spokesman at such a time; it is right and proper that it should be the Englishman who was inspired by the historic past. It led, as we now have the evidence to see, to a just appreciation and judgment of the war and the course to take. And not only of the war, we now have reason to reflect, but of the world-situation that would emerge from the war, the long-term trends and permanent interests of the Powers. There is greater safety in having that knowledge; without it there is, indeed, none.

A. L. ROWSE.

## TWO LADIES ON THE BENCH\*

By ERIC GILLETT

"REVIEWING," remarked the editor, "is in a bad state." He spoke to an audience of authors, publishers, and critics, and they seemed to agree with him. As the Poet Laureate recently reminded us, at the end of the 19th century there were more pages of comment and criticism about books and learned subjects published each week than can be seen in a month, or even longer, now.

"Our daily papers," he continues, in his stimulating introduction to *My Favourite English Poems*, "(there were nine morning and evening papers of the first rank) were then the best, the best-informed, the best-written, the most dignified and the most honest in the world. Each gave an entire page, or two pages, or more, on one day, or

on two days, in each week, to comment upon new books. There were more than half a dozen lively weekly papers, mostly concerned with books and, in a less degree, with the (then harmless) game of politics. There were, besides all these, the fortnightly, monthly and quarterly reviews for the weightier, lengthier and more exhaustive critical studies. In addition to these, there were the papers, reviews and journals of the arts and sciences, the learned societies and fellowships, the professions and the crafts. . . . All this enormous wealth and energy of thought and judgment, with its associate arts of

\* *Collective Impressions*. By Elizabeth Bowen. Longmans. 16s. *The Captain's Death Bed and other essays*. By Virginia Woolf. The Hogarth Press. 10s. 6d.

illustration, fine printing and precious binding, attended the wealth and energy of the literary creation of the time, that was varied as the life and full of movement."

To-day more books than ever are pouring from the presses. The great channel of criticism and comment, described by Mr. Masfield, is now down to an almost negligible trickle. One reason for this is the almost frightening shortage of newsprint. The other is the comparatively small number of independent proprietors of journals and the ever-widening spread of the large combines.

*The Times Literary Supplement* goes on its way with a justifiably high reputation for integrity. The contributors respect their anonymity. With only an occasional glaring exception, they play fair, and the present editor, Mr. Alan Pryce-Jones, is most active in encouraging young reviewers and in securing the best of the older generation to write for his paper. One might, perhaps, criticize him for the choice of fiction for notice and the way that it is dealt with. The criticism of novels has always been the weakest weapon in the *Literary Supplement's* armoury, and it is difficult to know why this is so. The unfortunate literary editors of the *Sunday Times* and the *Observer* perform a weekly miracle in pouring a weekly gallon into a pint pot of space. *The New Statesman* book reviews and articles are able, if acid, and I read most of them with the feeling that the critics believe they could have written the books under review so much better themselves. Twice a week the *Manchester Guardian*, in very small compass, notices a number of carefully selected works of all kinds, and, although these reviews often make heavy reading, a high standard is maintained. On Fridays the *Daily Telegraph* devotes two columns to books and Miss Pamela

Hansford Johnson writes about novels frankly and sensibly. Mr. Howard Spring's literary articles in *Country Life* are always worth reading, and his selections are usually interesting and often unexpected.

The departure of Miss Elizabeth Bowen, after some years, from her post as book reviewer for the *Tatler* leaves a vacancy that seems almost impossible to fill. Week after week Miss Bowen surveyed acutely and appreciatively a wide range of books. History and biography held no terrors for her. She was quick to hail a new novelist. Detective fiction, written with humour or providing some new, ingenious twist, was sure to receive an approving word. Sometimes one felt that the critic was being too kind. That is a good fault because appreciation is the first duty of the writer who sits in judgment. Dissection comes second. Barbs, stings and darts should usually be avoided unless they are used for attacking a work which the critic believes to be thoroughly bad and unworthy of the author.

Miss Bowen uses these weapons most rarely (in both senses of the word). In her *Tatler* articles she usually concentrated very wisely on telling the reader what the book was about, what the author set out to do, whether it was worth doing, and the effect produced on the reviewer's mind. It is a simple and excellent method when the reviewer happens to be someone of Miss Bowen's unquestioned ability. She loves books, is a considerable creative writer in fiction and in other forms. She can excel in impressionistic description, and she has accurately named her first book of critical essays and papers, *Collected Impressions*. They have been selected with obvious care from work done during the past 20 years.

It is interesting to note that Miss Bowen believes that the status of the

"Two Ladies on the Bench"

novelist as critic is uncertain. "It might be argued that the habitual storyteller would do better not to enter the critical field at all. At the same time, pleasure and interest attach, for the writer himself, to the experiment—there is probably no one who is willing to rest until he has tried his pen upon everything." That is true, but if the novelist is to write good reviews and criticism he must be capable of real detachment. If he is a novelist with a rigid approach to his subject he cannot be expected to discuss other people's fiction with impartiality. There is a remote chance that he may be able to throw light on the subject by comparison with his own method, and so write an important piece of literary criticism, but it is unlikely that he can ever be a satisfactory week-by-week reviewer.

Looking back over centuries of English literary criticism, it is significant to discover that almost no enduring work in this field has been done by a first-class novelist, and certainly not by a woman novelist. This is probably because, as Miss Bowen says: "No creative writer lacks—can afford to lack—the critical faculty. He is, however, accustomed to keep the faculty bent, like a hooded lamp, on his own work—which must not be allowed to slip, for an instant, out of the orbit of that remorseless glare. To wrench the neck of the lamp in another, outward direction is not easy; and, even when that is done, the light may not focus with the required certainty. It is hard for the novelist to disengage himself from problems generic to his calling, and, more narrowly, peculiar to himself."

Miss Bowen's *Collected Impressions* do not contain a single notice from her *Tatler* writings. She has preferred to reprint here longer pieces from critical work that appeared originally in the



VIRGINIA WOOLF

*New Statesman and Nation, Spectator, Times Literary Supplement, Orion, Observer,* and other periodicals. There are some prefaces, descriptive essays—Miss Bowen excels in this kind—and the well-known broadcast, *Anthony Trollope—A New Judgment*. They add up to a most enjoyable and impressive book. She is at her best as an impressionist. Anyone who has read her brilliant short story, *Ivy Grippled the Steps*, will confirm that. There are pieces here, *The Big House, Folkestone* 1945, *Salzburg* 1937, among others, which show her at her very best. The critical pieces are sensible and sound, but not, I think, remarkable. The three linked pieces about Virginia Woolf are not comprehensive, but they are very illuminating. Miss Bowen prefers the novels to the essays. In a paragraph she sets down what she considers to be Mrs. Woolf's outstanding contribution to our literature:

Virginia Woolf affected, one might say recreated, the consciousness of the age in which she wrote. She extended and



## THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

deepened, to a degree perhaps not measured yet, human susceptibility to sensation; ironically, she was to do this at a time when, because of the pressure put on it by events, sensation could be an insupportable tax. She was the extreme and final product of the English liberal mind.

It would be unprofitable to enter here upon a discussion of Mrs. Woolf's use of the "stream of consciousness" method. As an impressionist herself, Miss Bowen admired it, but I do not think that she does justice to Virginia Woolf's essays, although she speaks of "their flawless unities," or to the literary criticism.

Surely there is not a shadow of doubt that Virginia Woolf is the best of all English women literary critics, and probably the finest of our very few women essayists, although there may be some to advance the claims of Dora Wordsworth's friend, Maria Jane Jewsbury, others are staunch supporters of Miss Rose Macaulay, and yet others would have a word to say for Miss Bowen herself.

It is difficult to speak too highly of Virginia Woolf's essays on literature and on writers. Those who have read the two series of *The Common Reader*, *The Death of the Moth* and *The Moment* will turn to the latest and probably the last collection, *The Captain's Death Bed*, with justifiable anticipation.

Although Mr. Leonard Woolf assures the reader that all the essays would almost certainly have been revised or rewritten had the author lived, I feel something like a sense of relief that they were not touched. Revision is not always a good thing. Henry James made a notable mess when he applied second thoughts to his published novels. George Moore was only a little happier.

There is a sharpness, an "attack" in Virginia Woolf's pieces that might disappear if she had worked upon them

again. Her openings are admirable, a model to all essayists and critics. She plunges straight to the point and she catches the reader's attention at the outset, as in

One could wish that the psychoanalysts would go into the question of dairy keeping.

or

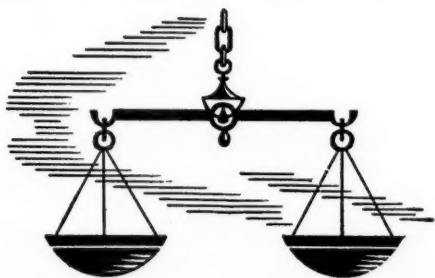
Nothing is more remarkable in reading the life of Crabbe than his passion for weeds.

or

The Captain lay dying on a mattress stretched on the floor of the boudoir room; a room whose ceiling had been painted to imitate the sky, and whose walls were painted with trellis work covered with roses upon which birds were perching.

Only a writer with complete mastery of her medium could begin with such a sure and steady hand. "She liked writing," Mr. E. M. Forster said, "with an intensity which few writers have attained, or even desired." That is true. There are many distinguished authors who dislike, even detest, the actual work of composition. Virginia Woolf loved books and enjoyed writing and she communicates these feelings to the reader. Miss Bowen remarked that "she was the child of a particular world—intellectual, liberal, civilized." Her father, Sir Leslie Stephen, was a famous man of letters in his day, and at the age of 15 his daughter enjoyed the run of a large library. Again and again in reading Virginia Woolf's writings on any subject whatever one is struck by her immense capacity for enjoyment and also for being able to go straight to the heart of the matter.

One of the best of these essays is on Walter Raleigh. Mrs. Woolf had been reading his letters and was struck by the singular fact that this professor of



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English literature hardly ever mentioned an author without dropping into facetious slang, "he could never mention Bill Blake or Bill Shakespeare or old Bill Wordsworth without seeming to apologize for bringing books into the talk at all." Then she continues: "He had himself spent no time scraping away the moss, repairing the broken noses on the fabric of English literature; and he did not press that pursuit upon his pupils. He talked his lectures almost out of his head. He joked, he told stories. He made the undergraduates rock with laughter. He drew them in crowds to his lecture room. And they went away loving something or other. Perhaps it was Keats. Perhaps it was the British Empire. Certainly it was Walter Raleigh. But we should be much surprised if anybody went away loving poetry, loving the art of letters."

Mrs. Woolf is wrong. They did. I may be told that Mrs. Woolf heard Raleigh lecture, but I find it hard to believe that she did. Raleigh did not believe in turning literature into a conscious art. He detested the academic approach to letters, and surely he was right. And yet I feel sure that he would have delighted in Virginia Woolf's essays, her humour, her sincerity, her insight, and her fairness. He would have chuckled at her comments on writers, as when she says of Captain Marryat who enjoyed good life and had to work for his living:

What with his building at Langham, and the great decoy which he had made on his best grazing land, and other extravagances . . . he left little wealth behind him. He had to keep hard at

his writing. He wrote his books sitting at a table in the dining-room, from which he could see the lawn and his favourite bull Ben Brace grazing there. And he wrote so small a hand that the copyist had to stick a pin in to mark the place. Also he was wonderfully neat in his dress, and would have nothing but white china on his breakfast table, and kept sixteen clocks and liked to hear them all strike at once. His children called him "Baby," though he was a man of violent passions, dangerous to thwart, and often "very grave" at home.

That is exactly the kind of picture that Raleigh himself loved to draw when he was lecturing, and I believe that Virginia Woolf would have gone away from his lecture on Peacock and rushed into Blackwell's to buy Peacock's complete works, just as I did.

The truth is that Walter Raleigh and Virginia Woolf, like Elizabeth Bowen, are among the appreciators of literature. When Raleigh talked, he was inspired. When Virginia Woolf wrote about books and people, she wrought splendid, endurable criticism and appreciation. Miss Bowen's "impressions" of literature and places are likely to be read for very many years.

After all, it is only natural that in a century when women have come into their own—whatever that "own" may be—there should be writers of the calibre of Virginia Woolf, Rose Macaulay, Rebecca West and Elizabeth Bowen, all able to compete on equal terms with the critics and reviewers of the time, and to surpass most of them in the excellence and lively interest of their writings.

ERIC GILLETT.

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# BOOKS NEW AND OLD

## THE DIVINE POET: RICHARD CRASHAW

By CHARLES RICHARD CAMMELL

THREE hundred years ago in Italy died Richard Crashaw, on whom, and on George Herbert, alone among British poets, was conferred the noblest title that may be won by a master of song ; for each of them has been surnamed *The Divine*. But whereas the divinity of Herbert took the way of humanity, the poet's heart beating in tune with every heart that loves God and would serve mankind, the divine spirit in Crashaw bore him aloft to regions remote from earthly strife, till his soul seems to flutter seraphic about the jasper-paved courts of Heaven. If Herbert's poetic mood is a perpetual prayer, Crashaw's is a rapturous ecstasy. Haunted by the marvellous beauty of his verse, rapt in the blaze of its jewelled imagery, we follow his radiant, incorporeal flight till he is lost in the effulgence of mystic vision, till the impassioned melody of his singing would seem to mingle with the voices of the celestial choir.\*

Neither the day of Crashaw's birth nor of his death has been remembered. He was born in London perhaps in 1612 or 1613 ; though the first editor of his collected works, Turnbull, says of the date of his birth that " it may have been about 1616."† He died in Italy, at Loretto in 1650, according to Sir

Edmund Gosse and Prof. Courthope ; about 1650 according to Turnbull ; late in 1649 according to others.

The son of Dr. William Crashaw, a Puritan " Preacher of God's Word," and author of such tractates as *The Disloyalty of Loyola* and *The Besspotted Jesuite : Whose Gospell is full of Blasphemy against the Blood of Christ*, the great Catholic lyrist was schooled at Charterhouse, going thence in 1632 to Pembroke Hall, Cambridge. He became a Fellow of Peterhouse in 1637, and in 1644 was one of the sixty-five Fellows who were ejected from the University for refusal to subscribe the Covenant ; for the Puritan's son had become a devout Anglican.

At Cambridge began his immortal friendship with Cowley, his junior by several years, but already famous through his precocious *Poetical Blossoms*. Their friendship was inevitable : two young poets of genius, two brilliant scholars, deeply religious, staunch loyalists, two hearts, pure, noble and brave. Crashaw was accomplished alike in poetry, music, painting, and engraving. The twelve beautiful plates which illustrate the edition of his later sacred poems, *Carmen Deo Nostro*, published in Paris, 1652, are his own work as an artist.\* His learning embraced the Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, French and Spanish languages. His Latin and Greek *Epigrammata Sacra* were published at Cambridge, anonymously, in his student days (1634).

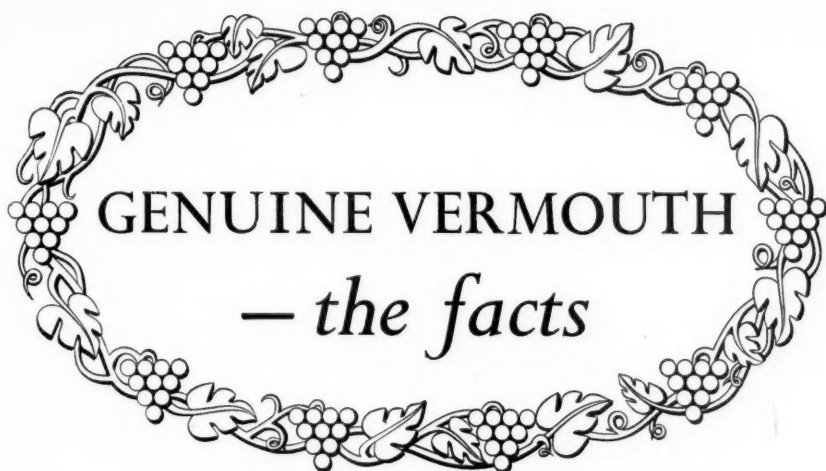
Cast into exile by the Rebellion,

\* Turnbull's edition of Crashaw, pp. x-xiii.

\* The present writer's *Sonnet on the Divine Poets, Herbert and Crashaw*, appeared in *The New English Review*, November, 1948.

† *The Complete Works of Richard Crashaw, Canon of Loretto*. Edited by William B. Turnbull, Esq., of Lincoln's Inn, Barrister-at-Law. London: John Russell Smith (Library of Old Authors), 1858, p. viii.





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Crashaw was rescued from destitution in Paris by Cowley. Through the good offices of the exiled queen, Henrietta-Maria, to whom Cowley was Secretary, he obtained a similar appointment in Rome with Cardinal Palotta. In Paris he had passed from the Anglican to the Roman Church. During the year 1649-50 he went to Loretto, where he was appointed a Canon. Within a short time he was dead. His remains were interred in the Chapel of Our Lady of Loretto. Crashaw "died, not without grave suspicion of being poisoned." \* In Rome he had made dangerous enemies. The profligacy of the Papal Court had deeply stirred his sensitive spirit, and with his usual fearlessness he had denounced the scandalous lives of some members of the Cardinal's entourage.

Cowley's elegy *On the Death of Mr.*

\* Sir Edmund Gosse : *En. Brit.*, 9th ed. Vol. VI., p. 553. (Crashaw.)

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Crashaw is universally celebrated, a poem in which that stern critic Samuel Johnson discerned "beauties which common authors may justly think not only above their attainment, but above their ambition." \*

Poet and Saint! to thee alone are given  
The two most sacred names of Earth and Heaven.

From this exalted invocation, Cowley passes, through flights of pathos and eulogy, to Loretto :

Angels (they say) brought the famed  
Chapel there,  
And bore the sacred load in Triumph  
through the air.  
'Tis surer much they brought thee there,  
and They,  
And Thou, their charge, went singing all  
the way.

Pardon, my Mother Church, if I consent  
That Angels led him when from thee he  
went,

For even in error sure no danger is  
When join'd with so much piety as his.  
Ah, mighty God, with shame I speak't and  
grief,  
Ah, that our greatest faults were in  
Belief! . . .  
His Faith perhaps in some nice tenets  
might  
Be wrong ; his Life, I'm sure, was in the  
right;  
And I myself a Catholic will be,  
So far at least, great Saint, to pray to thee.

Surely no more inspired rebuke to the  
party-spirit, which divides Christendom,  
has been penned.

In 1646, an anonymous friend in London had published Crashaw's English poems in his absence. The book contained the *Steps to the Temple*, comprising *The Weeper*, the *Sospetto d'Herode*, the earlier *Hymns* and the *Divine Epigrams*, (the title being an avowed homage to *The Temple* of Herbert), together with the secular

\* Johnson : *Lives of the English Poets* (Cowley).

"The Divine Poet"

poems, entitled *The Delights of the Muses*.

Turnbull remarked of Crashaw that "As a poet, his works have ever been appreciated by those most qualified to decide upon their stirring beauties, and have suggested to others (too frequently without acknowledgment) some of their finest imageries." This just comment applies peculiarly to Pope, whose supreme masterpiece, *Eloisa to Abelard*, was largely inspired, in theme, versification and metaphor, by Crashaw's elegies, *Alexias: The Complaint of the Forsaken Wife of Saint Alexis*. Milton's description of Satan in his infernal kingdom, is modelled on stanzas of *Sospetto d'Herode*, Crashaw's longest poem, a free translation of Marini's *Strage degli Innocenti*.

Historians of poetry have classed Crashaw with the group of poets which Dryden (rather inappropriately) called *Metaphysical*, and certainly his style resembles that of the Neopolitan Marini the chief poet of that luxuriant school. Crashaw possessed Marini's genius for sensuous imagery and fantastic metaphor, for exquisite descriptions in verse of various melody. The style is the literary counterpart of the Baroque style in the Arts, and Marini is to poetry, what Bernini is to sculpture. It was Crashaw's peculiar province to apply all the pagan beauties of these Italians to the service of the Christian Muse. As Cowley beautifully expresses it :

Thy spotless Muse, like Mary, did contain  
The boundless Godhead; she did well  
disdain

That her Eternal Verse employ'd should be  
On a less Subject than Eternity.

It is in sound and colour, as much as in the rapture of spiritual devotion, that Crashaw excels all his brother "metaphysicians." He has not George Herbert's meditative quietism, nor



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Cowley's vast range of mind, nor Donne's gravity. He triumphs most where Donne most signally fails; for Donne's defective "ear" and obscure expression, marred repeatedly his highest flights, whereas Crashaw's ear was supernaturally sensitive to the subtlest accords of the lyre. His poetry o'er-flows with

Sidneian showers

Of sweet discourse, whose powers  
Can crown old Winter's head with  
flowers.\*

No poet loses more than Crashaw from citation of extracts from his poems the beauties of which largely depend on the progressive accumulation of metaphor to enhance a single thought. He rifles earth and heaven of lovely images to beautify his theme, as Shelley does in his ode *To a Skylark*. Crashaw's poem *The Weeper*, of which Prof. Courthope complained that "no metrical composition in the English language of the same length contains so much imagery and so little thought,"† is, seen with eyes more visionary, a masterpiece wherein poetry and music have united to create a rapture around the tears of the Magdalene. To cite any stanza from so subtle a context is to pluck a flower from a bouquet the blooms of which are combined with consummate artistry; yet each flower—each stanza—is perfect:

The dew no more will weep,  
The primrose's pale cheek to deck;  
The dew no more will sleep,  
Nuzzled in the lily's neck.  
Much rather would it tremble here,  
And leave them both to be thy tear.

The same qualities illustrate all Crashaw's best poems, whether sacred

\* Crashaw: *The Delights of the Muses* (Wishes to his supposed Mistress).

† W. J. Courthope: *History of English Poetry*, Vol. III, pp. 227-8.

or secular, his *Hymns To Saint Theresa*, or *To the Name above every Name*, *The Name of Jesus*, or his *Hymn of the Nativity, sung by the Shepherds*, who answer one another in dialogue, with a Chorus of shepherds to complete the harmony:

Proud World, said I, cease your contest,  
And let the mighty Babe alone,  
The Phoenix builds the Phoenix' nest,  
Love's architecture is His own.  
The Babe whose birth embraces this morn,  
Made his own bed ere He was born.  
*Chorus.* The Babe whose birth, etc.

Of the secular poems, such pieces as the famous *Wishes to his supposed Mistress* and, above all, *Music's Duel*, are, relative to their lesser themes, equally lovely. The latter was inspired by Strada's Latin poem on the Musician and the Nightingale, which Crashaw extended and enhanced with the most exquisite art. His nightingale now

Trails her plain ditty in one long-spun note  
Through the sleek passage of her open  
throat:  
and now

her supple breast thrills out  
Sharp airs, and staggers in a warbling  
doubt  
Of dallying sweetness, hovers o'er her skill,  
And folds in waved notes, with a trembling  
bill,  
The pliant series of her slippery song.

Such verses, and many more from this and other of Crashaw's poems, forestalling as they do by more than a century and a half alike Moore, Keats and Shelley, are truly wonderful.

History records that Richard Crashaw excelled in all the arts. Assuredly their several characters would seem to be joined in his verses: the painter's eye, the musician's ear, the poet's imagination. This man, whose brief earthly life embraced so perfect a purity, so ardent a devotion, such fearless defence of his own highest prin-

"The Divine Poet"

ciples, was without question one of the most inspired and loviest lyrists in our literature. He had earned largely the splendid coronal of song which the great poet who had known and loved him laid on his hearse :

Lo, here I beg, (I whom thou once didst  
prove  
So humble to esteem, so good to love)  
Not that thy Spirit might on me doubled  
be,  
I ask but half thy mighty Spirit for me :  
And when my Muse soars with so strong a  
wing,  
'Twill learn of things divine, and first of  
*thee* to sing.\*

\* The concluding lines of Cowley's elegy  
*On the Death of Mr. Crashaw.*

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By LORD DUNSANY

**A**S the organising of our civilisation grows more complete and efficient there is less and less escape from it, so that it is all the more pleasant to read the account of anybody who has done so, as in this book \* by Mrs. Eastwood, published by Messrs. Wingate. Should we search out all the tyrannies to which we are subject, we would find enthroned behind them the Master Tyrant, Time. You fear him on every occasion you look at your watch : you obey him whenever you hurry because your watch tells you that it is later than what you thought. Whoever wears a watch is

\* *River Diary*, by Dorothea Eastwood.  
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accompanied by his secret police ; whoever passes a clock is before one of his sentries. One may notice this in the Sahara, which is beyond his dominion, and where one has leisure to notice such things; but Mrs. Eastwood discovers it no farther away than the Usk, a truth that she clearly expresses in the words, "It was pleasant to feel there was no hurry—no clock to watch, no time to keep." Having realised that, one is free. There remain such things as storms, lack of water or too much of it; but these things can be met as equals, not as slave and tyrant. Even Comrade Stalin, no doubt, goes in awe of Time.

In a hut and a tent with her family on the Usk, Mrs. Eastwood concerns herself with things that matter, such as Orion, Sirius, owls, windows glowing, and cooking-pots; things that have been going a long time and that are not to be blown away by the draught from any weary sigh that may chance to be heaved by Fashion.

And one may learn from this book how much may be gained by travel. For she walks from her hut to the shop in the village to buy some bread and paraffin, and tells us of the things she saw on the way; and one realises that it is possible for some people to go round the world and see less. Indeed in the freedom from Time that she found on the Usk Mrs. Eastwood has rediscovered many things that the world is losing sight of amongst its cities—cities into which of late certain heralds of Nature have come, groundsel and willowherb, as a reminder that cities are not immortal, from her who is. And the authoress is qualified by two attributes to make her discoveries, one a sympathetic observation, and the other a doubt as to whether Man is the greatest of all created things; and without possessing that doubt it soon narrows down to Old Blaburians, or whatever clique it be to which the

observer belongs, as the only persons of any importance in all the world; but with it one's eyes are opened to thousands of forms of life in one of many planets, and one's imagination is opened to many stars, out of whose millions is made the Milky Way, and to millions of galaxies of which the Milky Way is but one. And before that fishing-hut on the Usk these things are all spread out, as indeed they are anywhere; but it is not everywhere that they are observed, and it is not everyone who having observed stars and flowers and butterflies and many kinds of birds can bring them so vividly before our eyes as they are brought in this book.

DUNSANY.

## Novels

SOME TAME GAZELLE. Barbara Pym.  
*Cape.* 9s. 6d.

THE LOTTERY. Shirley Jackson. *Gollancz.*  
10s. 6d.

UNDER THE SKIN. Phyllis Bottome.  
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*Some Tame Gazelle* is all about maiden ladies and curates, period any time up to 1939 I should say, for Miss Harriet's Sunday suppers would not, I fear, survive rationing and the complete disappearance of domestic staff. The misses Harriet and Belinda Bede are affectionately satirised but they are not guyed. Harriet is a baggage with a taste for outright remarks and unsuitable clothes; Belinda is a blue-stocking *manquée* with a comfortable unrequited passion for Archdeacon Hoccleve, who is himself a neo-Trollopian masterpiece. There is also Miss Edith Livingstone, who wears bad tweeds and did something noble and embarrassing in the Balkans: a visiting dressmaker who combines resignation and criticism in the right proportions, an Italian count and, various clerical gentlemen. I would like to think that life still goes on like this, behind the bow-fronted windows of white-painted Georgian villas, set in green lawns and signed with an arucaria. In any case, the

## Novels

anxiety with which one reviewer followed the matrimonial intentions of a Colonial Bishop says a lot for Miss Pym's ability as a storyteller. This idyllic but by no means guileless novel can be recommended to all who are tired of sex, slums and crime.

The collection of short stories by Miss Jackson displays a remarkable insight into the less pleasant places of the human mind and heart. Every story in this book, except the delightfully absurd trifle, *My Life with R. H. Macy*, deals with neurosis. The title story, *The Lottery*, is destined to be included in every subsequent anthology of the horrific. It is the story of the survival of the fertility sacrifice in a New England village, told with perfect realisation of every part and superb timing. If the researches of the psychoanalysts have done nothing else, they have killed the old-fashioned spine-chiller. No supernatural phenomena is half as terrifying as the manifestations of human psychosis. This American import shows a powerful single-track talent; it is definitely not bedside reading.

Miss Phyllis Bottome's novel deals with the colour problem in the West Indies, a subject which is beginning, for the first time, to trouble the general public. *Under the Skin* is the story of Lucy Armstrong, an attractive English girl who accepts—with insufficient consideration, I thought—the position of head mistress in a racially mixed girls' school on one of the islands. Still, the poor girl had just struggled out of two tragic love affairs. She finds that the school seethes with intrigues, that the colour problem has infinite nuances, including Chinese as well as African half-castes and she precipitates them all by falling in love with a coloured doctor who is bitterly hostile to Europeans. The incidents of the plot are exciting, though they are not always convincing and the individual characterisation is not nearly as good as the general summary of conditions and problems. Sentimentality and realism are curiously mixed throughout the novel, but as a story it is well-knit and its honesty is impressive.

RUBY MILLAR.



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By ALEC ROBERTSON

**A** PART from an admirable performance and recording of Haydn's Symphony No. 83 in G minor ("La Poule") by the Halle Orchestra (H.M.V. 21076-8), a real novelty in the shape of an Overture by Handel for wind-band excellently played and recorded by the London Baroque Ensemble (Parlophone R 20581), and a welcome new recording by the Hungarian String Quartet of Beethoven's Twelfth Quartet in E flat, Op. 172 (H.M.V. DBS 9472, DB 9473-6), the July lists had little to tempt one to write about. A number of Decca long-playing records were also issued, but these must await review on a later occasion.

I propose, therefore, to devote this page to some remarkable recordings of different kinds of music that may be familiar to some readers but are more likely to have escaped the notice of others and so, for them, lie like buried treasure in the catalogues.

At the head of the list I should put the nine Monteverdi Madrigals recorded under the direction of Nadia Boulanger (H.M.V. DB 5038-42, on special order only) which have a good claim to be, in point of both performance and recording, the most perfect records ever issued. Sample these, if you must, by ordering DB 5038 which contains the composer's own arrangement for five voices of his infinitely moving *Lamento d' Arianna* ("Lasciatemi Mon're") and also the wonderfully dramatic and colourful six-part Madrigal *Hor ch'el ciel e la terra*. Utterly different in character but equally ravishing in sound is the set of records of Brahms' *Liebeslieder Waltzer*, Op. 52 for vocal quartet and two pianos (Columbia LX 1114-17). Another contrast between beautiful things is provided by Suzanne Danco's classically perfect singing of Caciini's "*Amarilli*," with an air by Bononcini on the reverse (Decca K 2070),

and Maggie Teyte's golden tones in Fauré's enchanting songs about two charming girls, *Lydia* and *Nell* (H.M.V. DA 1831). Keeping the same kind of parallel there is Campoli's expressive and stylish performance of Tartini's G minor sonata for violin and piano (Decca K 1531-2) and Szymanowski strangely fascinating and impressionistic *Fountain of Arethusa* with a dance from Falla's *Vida Breve* on the reverse (Columbia DX 1533). These are beautifully played by Tibor Varga.

There is a feast of delight in the ballet suite "The Great Elopement," pieces by Handel arranged and conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham, with the London Philharmonic Orchestra on H.M.V. DB 6295-7—perfect summer music—and as a contrast there are the two sensuous, vital, vulgar (in the good sense) Intermezzos from Wolf Ferrari's Opera "The Jewels of the Madonna," played by Boyd Neel and the National Symphony Orchestra (Decca K 1290).

Two more recordings, to end with, in serious vein. I have never known anyone fail to be impressed by Gretchaninov's setting of the Russian plain chant Creed. A solo voice sings the text to the ancient chant against a harmonised background of voices vocalising, which reflects the changing sentiments of the words (H.M.V. C 2206).

Contrast with this the cool beauty and lovely line of the soprano solo, with men's chorus, in the *Laudate Dominum* from Mozart's *Vesperæ Solemnnes de Confessore* (K 339), which is sung by Ursula van Diemen with a poise and a *legato* that is as nearly perfect as one can hope for (H.M.V. C 2736).

At different times and in different moods, alone and with friends, all these recordings have proved treasures—dig them up!

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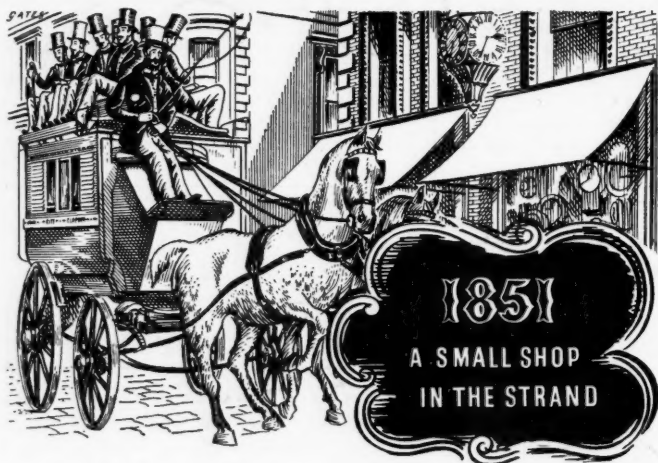
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